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KING "BY THE GRACE OF GOD."

An Historical Romance.

BY
JULIUS RODENBERG.

"A crown
Golden in show is but a wreath of thorns;
Yet he who reigns within himself is more a king;
Which every wise and virtuous man attains."
MILTON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY AND SON,
NEW BURLINGTON STREET.
1871.

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PREFACE.

ABOUT two years ago, on one of those mild sunny autumn days, which are so beautiful in London, I wandered through the Houses of Parliament, where amidst the mighty and proud trophies of a glorious past, two things especially struck me. One was a picture in the corridor of the Upper House, a fresco painting, representing a funeral procession. In the foreground is a coffin, borne by mourners : it is winter, and from the sky, which has been growing more and more overcast, snow is falling.

The most touching figure in the picture is that of a young girl, who has sunk on the cold ground, and has her arms stretched out

imploringly towards the coffin, as though she would entreat it to arrest its course. Her face expresses the deepest agony ; she weeps for her King. It is CHARLES THE FIRST being carried to his grave by the last of his faithful attendants.

But how shall I characterise my second impression ? It was created in me from the circumstance that throughout this magnificent palace, which unites all the honourable relics of the olden time with the brilliant splendour and pomp of the present, and which recalls at every turn to the representatives of the people assembled within its walls, the history of its constitution, that in this house where all the great names of England are engraven on its stones, the name and even every trace of one is wanting, who, of all, was the greatest—OLIVER CROMWELL.

The presence of the picture, and the intentional avoidance of the slightest allusion to the heroic career of the Great Tribune of the People, showed me at once that the great period of the Revolution was not yet con-

cluded ; that its last question was still unsolved—its final results not yet attained.

The impressions which I then received determined the subject of this novel. The memory of CHARLES THE FIRST is still surrounded by a certain poetic halo, recognised and received by both Houses of Parliament, whilst that of CROMWELL is unsung, unhonoured, blotted out, without a grave, without a home !

Two hundred years have passed since then ; two centuries full of new revolutions, fresh struggles, world-overturning wars, and still the severe figure of the great Puritan, laden with the curse of blind party hatred, and with the anathema of all throughout the world who are enemies to modern ideas, must give place to the bleeding shadow of the King.

In the fact of CHARLES THE FIRST, the type of mediæval feudal monarchy, being represented, and OLIVER CROMWELL, the spirit of Freedom, still lacking embodiment, still struggling for recognition, is not the history of the two centuries expressed ?

Oliver Cromwell is only to be understood

in the light of an eminent modern personage, therefore the novel in which he is depicted claims a thoroughly modern interest.

Whoever studies Cromwell studies the new time, and whoever understands *him* has the key to the comprehension of that also.

The more absorbed I became in the contemplation of this long misunderstood character, the more I discovered what a wide field it offered for instituting such a comparison.

I felt very much the same in regard to my novel, as Victor Hugo did respecting his drama, in the celebrated preface of which he avows : "The name of Oliver Cromwell awoke within me the idea only of a fanatical regicide, of a great soldier ; but on looking through the chronicles of those times, and searching the English memoirs of the seventeenth century, I saw with astonishment a new character open before my eyes." These words were written by Victor Hugo in 1827. Since that time literature has received an invaluable addition in the "Speeches and Letters

of Cromwell," taken from old documents and papers long buried, in the possession of private families, and now first collected and edited by Thomas Carlyle. Since the appearance of this work the opinion of the educated portion of the world at least has undergone a considerable change.

Of Cromwell, whose grave was broken open, whose body was burnt, and whose ashes were scattered to the four winds, nothing remains but a voice! But, from the depths of that century, how awful does this voice sound, by which Cromwell undertakes his own defence, felling to the earth the detractors of his fame, the sceptics of his greatness.

The writer of the novel had, therefore, this advantage over the author of the drama, in that the former found expressed in Cromwell's own words what the latter could only conjecture, and has often erroneously conjectured.

Our increased sources of historical research, and the philosophic spirit, which has penetrated every science, distinguish the his-

torical novel of our day from that of Sir Walter Scott's time.

With deep reverence do we name Sir Walter Scott, the creator of the historical novel, from whose hands we have received it as a work of art. The historical novelist is not satisfied with deeds alone ; he looks for ideas, and seeks to give them a pure expression. He unites the poet's demand for creation with historic truth, by giving the daily life of those who, though they play no prominent part, represent in certain characteristic ways the prevalent ideas of the period. The course of events passes over such characters ; they fall before they have had time to engrave themselves on the memory of mankind ; but they offer themselves favourably for the historical romance, and I have made use of such characters for my book.

At the commencement, persons appear whose names may certainly be met with in detailed memoirs of the time, but will be sought for in vain in the general history ; for what account could there be given of them ? Their fate was that of many others, who

like them struggled and suffered ; objects of sympathy to those immediately concerned, and of interest to antiquaries.

These the poet seeks, and the existence of their graves, on which is no proud laurel, but only a modest wreath, placed by the trembling hands of the survivors, gives to his book that colour of reality, which is far above that of fiction. The heroes remain which belong to the historian, but the poet fearlessly follows his inspiration, awakening his characters from the mould of centuries. Nothing prevents his painting the picture of their life with perfect freedom, and in such a manner that the spirit of the time shall appear unbroken, showing to the reader, that during the progress of extraordinary events, ordinary lives have still their requirements ; that side by side with the history of the nation flows the history of the family, the home, and the heart ; and it is in the struggle against these quiet, ever re-acting influences, that the strong, who have braved the storms of a revolution, frequently succumb.

Guizot, in the preface to his “ *Collection des*

Mémoires relatifs à la Revolution d'Angleterre," says, "we misunderstand the true nature of the circumstances, until some memorial or narrative places us in the midst of that unknown public, whose only part in them appears to have been that of endurance." Thus he has given to the historical novel its task and its characters ; not the heroes themselves, but the spectators of their heroic deeds.

From the circle of this "unknown public," are taken the more prominent characters of this present novel, which has no pretension beyond that of being a picture of varied family life, drawn, however, on the background of a great period—of a period whose intellectual value and wonder-working importance is comprehended in the one name of

OLIVER CROMWELL !

JULIUS RODENBERG.

Berlin, on Schiller's birthday, 1869.

KING

"BY THE GRACE OF GOD."

CHAPTER I.

THE MAY-POLE.

ONE bright April evening the villagers of Childerley were assembled on the church green, busy in the erection of a may-pole, which caused the greatest delight to the majority of the crowd, but excited the pious wrath of Zedekiah Pickerling, the puritan miller of Childerley. In vain, however, did he pour forth his texts, showing the vanity and iniquity of the whole proceeding. Martin Bumpus, the renowned butler and factotum of Sir Tobias Cutts, the Squire of Childerley, a fine stalwart fellow, and a prime favourite with all the village maidens, was not to be daunted, and as he had very nearly the whole village on his side, the miller felt that nothing could be done till he had procured assistance from the Roundheads of Chesterton and Cot-

tenham, two villages not far from Childerley, all three being situated in the south-western part of Cambridgeshire.

A more serious turn, however, was given to the affair, by the sudden appearance of the vicar, on the steps of his door which faced the church : by his side stood some of his principal parishioners, and in front was the clerk with a printed paper in his hand.

"Dear friends," said the vicar, a tall slender man, in whose noble countenance an expression of earnestness amounting almost to sadness, was depicted, "I am grieved to put a stop to your innocent mirth, but the commands of authority must be obeyed."

"That's the right word," said Zedekiah ; but Bumpus stepped forward :—

"This is the first time I have dared to contradict your reverence, but what authority do you mean ?"

"My good man," replied the vicar, gently, "it does not become us to cavil, but to obey. God will decide between the combatants."

Here he made a sign to the clerk to read the order issued by the parliament for the putting down of may-poles and such like frivolities, and the infliction of fines in cases of infringement.

The order, which was listened to in silence, but with sorrowful indignation, was then nailed against the church door.

"Praise be to the Lord God of Sabaoth!" drawled Zedekiah in a nasal tone.

"The may-pole shall stand in spite of all!" ejaculated Martin Bumpus.

The pastor was about to leave the scene, when the cry arose, "The squire, the squire!" and caps were doffed and waved in salute.

Sir Tobias Cutts, Knight of Childerley, was a stately gentleman, with a beaming eye and portly frame, that spoke volumes for the excellency of his wines, and the abundance of his table. He was universally beloved, and the villagers would have gone through fire and water to serve him.

"Good day, reverend sir," he said, extending his hand to the vicar: "Good-day, my children," his usual mode of addressing his people. "What is going on here, may I ask?" for he soon perceived that something extraordinary had happened. The vicar pointed to the placard nailed against the church door, and the squire went towards it with measured steps; but it was some time before he could master its contents, for although a first-rate

shot, and possessing such a keen sight that he could descry a fox, if it were ever so deep in its hole, yet his otherwise excellent eyes played him false, when any printed or written matter had to be deciphered, for, alas ! the good knight cared little for literature. When he had once, however, taken in the sense of the order, he changed colour, and every trace of joviality disappeared from his face. It required all the tact and efforts of the vicar to soothe his indignant feelings, which were still more roused by Zedekiah and his party, who called out "The Parliament and the Covenant !"

It had been the principle of the knight's life to stand out boldly against injustice ; but of late years his conduct had been influenced by what appeared to superficial observers very like prudence and calculation, for were not *his* castle and *his* tenantry in peaceful security, whilst for the last three years almost every other part of England had been laid waste by this cruel civil war ? All who knew Sir Tobias, however, bore witness to his upright character, and felt there must be some good motive for his conduct ; and so in fact there was, but it was known only to few.

With a voice which betrayed his emotion, he said after some deliberation :

“I can see only one of two things to be done, either to obey Parliament, and go without our may-pole, or to disobey it, and pay the fine. Now, I have determined upon the last.”

“But the money, Sir Knight?” cried Bumpus.

“I shall pay that,” he cried, “and you shall have your may-pole, and a procession besides into the forest, to fetch home the may, my children, and my whole household shall accompany you, according to the good old custom.”

“Long live the knight!” burst from the happy villagers, and they all set merrily to work again, headed by Martin Bumpus, and before the evening bell rang out, the may-pole was standing in all its glory of ribbons and flags, bathed in the rosy glow of the setting sun. Sir Tobias now prepared to turn his steps homewards, and as he passed the vicar, he whispered, “Remember your promise to sup with us to-night.”

The last person to quit the village green was Zedekiah Pickerling.

"Their eyes stand out with fatness," he murmured, following the knight with his eyes; "they have more than heart could wish." Then turning to his companions, he said, "It is written, 'Israel, repair to thy tents;' let us go and take counsel with the pious ones of the neighbourhood."

Meanwhile the knight pursued his way to the Castle, absorbed apparently in anxious thought. "If they took this direction," he soliloquised, "they could reach Huntingdon, but how could they pass through the villages without exciting suspicion? No, that will not do." He went forward a few steps, and then paused under a large old chestnut tree in the castle avenue — "There," said he, boring a hole in the gravel with his stick, "there is Oxford, where his majesty the King is holding his court, surrounded by the heads of our great families, and his army; and here," boring another hole, "is Childerley House, the seat of a loyal Cavalier. This is the way they ought to take, but how is it to be managed? It is not so much their personal safety, as the safe delivery of the dispatches they bear from her majesty to the King."

Slower than was his wont the knight

ascended the slope to the Castle, a building in the Tudor style, whose red walls were still lighted by the last rays of the setting sun, though the dark blue shadows of evening had already encamped under the broad gateway. A peaceful landscape of meadow and pasture land lay stretched before it, now clothed in all the delicate colours of early spring ; whilst in the west, at the edge of the horizon, a purple streak of light glowed over a forest, the only one in this panorama, and which now arrested the attention of the knight. A new idea seemed to strike him. "Bravo !" said he, waving his hat, "that is the forest of Longstow, and through that forest shall the King's messengers ride to Oxford."

The Castle was surrounded by a deep moat, which had to be traversed by a draw-bridge, and the courtyard, with its iron gates, and walls mounted with guns, presented a very military appearance, whilst the whole population of the Castle was ready, at a signal from their master, to be transformed into soldiers. Two joyous young voices welcomed the knight as he hastened across the court.

"Good evening, dear father ! good evening !" and a slight graceful figure flew to meet

him, whilst a boy, in the distance, might be seen trying to curb a white pony. "Is it true that the may-pole is put up in the village, papa, and that we are to fetch home the may?"

"Yes, and you are to be Maid Marian, and Johnnie shall be Robin Hood, and wear the green coat!"

"That will be glorious!" exclaimed the boy.

These two children, reared in the solitude of country life, retained their freshness, like a bed of flowers in the morning dew, before the hand of man has touched it. The knight now drew his daughter close to him.

"Olivia, my child," he said, "you must try to think of yourself from this time as the lady of the Castle; you are now nearly grown up, and are as sensible, ay, and as charming, as any young lady in the neighbourhood. Since your mother's death, Childerley House has never exercised that hospitality which it behoves every nobleman to extend to all who need a welcome and a shelter; the crown is for the king, God protect him! the coronet for the knight, but hospitality is the privilege of all."

“Father,” said the young girl gravely, “when you recall my mother to my mind, I have the pattern of every virtue before me ; and I shall be only too happy if I can assist in making Childerley House more like home to you by welcoming any honoured guests you may expect.”

“The guests are already there,” said the knight, in a suppressed voice, clasping her hand more firmly.

“The guests already there !” cried Olivia. “Are they fugitive Cavaliers ?”

“More than that, my child, they are messengers from the unhappy queen, Henrietta Maria of England ; but Olivia, you are the daughter of a Cavalier, and will show yourself worthy of the confidence I have placed in you, for it is necessary to guard the strictest secrecy. The village is infected with the plague of hypocrisy and treason, and how can I be sure even of my own castle ? One person, I know, is as firm as the Gospel Oak in the forest of Longstow, and that is my trusty and faithful Martin Bumpus. Where is he, my child ?”

Olivia withdrew to call the butler, who it must be stated possessed such versatile

talents, that he was at that moment occupied in shoeing a pony, and therefore made his appearance with bare arms and a leathern apron.

"My father will want you to wait at table this evening, Martin, as we shall have guests."

"Guests, and this evening!" cried Martin; "this is a joyful day for me."

"This is not a matter for exultation," said the knight, "but rather for silence."

"I understand," said Martin, putting his hand on his heart.

"Our guests have come a long and toilsome way, and will require a hearty meal, and the best wines our cellar can furnish. You alone must wait on us, no one in the castle must know who our guests are, whence they come, and whither they go. Have all in readiness, and when I ring bring the lights into the large hall. Olivia," said he, turning to his daughter, "your brother may know all that I have told you, and will dine with us to-day. He is now sixteen, and must learn to keep a secret for his King. The day may come when he will have to give far different proofs of his loyalty."

CHAPTER II.

THE GUESTS.

THE knight now mounted the staircase, leading to the large dining-hall, which was in the central and inhabited part of the Castle. In its spacious chimney logs of oak were crackling and blazing as merrily as on a winter's day, and the fire-light played cheerily on the wainscoted ceiling and oak-panelled walls, against which were hung arms and armour of all kinds. Sir Tobias, though alone, looked cautiously all round, and then went up to the wall on the right hand side of the fire-place. He put his ear against it, as though listening, and gave three hard taps, upon which a foot-step was heard from within, which suddenly stopped. The knight repeated the signal.

"Is it you, Sir Tobias?" said a muffled voice.

"Yes, God help me!" replied the knight, drawing a key from his pocket, and inserting it in a secret key-hole under the wainscot. A piece of the panelling then flew open, and revealed a hidden closet between the walls, lighted only dimly from above. A man's figure now stepped carefully out of the hiding-place, clad in part only in armour, and the flickering flames revealed a worn, but noble and expressive countenance.

"Give me your hand, Sir Harry," said the knight. "It does my heart good to shake the hand of a brave man. Welcome to Childerley House! Come to the fire and warm yourself, for the night is damp."

"Well, for that matter," replied Sir Harry with a sly smile, "I have found it dry enough between your chimneys, and cannot complain of the cold either."

"I believe you," said the knight, laughing, "I believe you, but there is good news, Sir Harry. To-morrow you can pursue your journey, though it grieves me to part with a brave comrade; but when the King and his army have crushed this rebel Parliament, with its pack of roving preachers, Childerley House shall give you a very different welcome."

“ In the meantime,” said Sir Harry Slingsby, “ it is of the utmost importance to the throne and kingdom that these despatches should be delivered to the King ; the fate of the war depends on them.”

Sir Tobias now proceeded to discuss the plan he had arranged for the knight's safe journey to Oxford, and acquainted him with the excellent opportunity which was afforded of his escaping all observation by joining the procession to the forest of Longstow, disguised as a peasant.

“ If you follow me to the window, you will understand my plan at once ; from thence you can see the forest in the distance.”

Whilst the knights were thus absorbed in conversation, two young heads were thrust out of the secret panel, which had been left unlocked, and peered forth as inquisitively as a couple of deer from the shades of the forest. A handsome lad, in all the freshness and vigour of early youth, scrambled out and dragged after him a younger boy, of a delicate fragile form.

“ Don't be afraid ; we are safe now,” said the elder of the two, whose head was completely encircled with long brown curls.

"Oh, my lord, if you only knew how my heart beats," said a soft melodious voice.

"But surely you can feel the warm pressure of my hand, Manuel?" replied George.

"You must not call me by that name when we are alone, it is against our agreement."

"I only do it to accustom myself to the sound. Only imagine, were I to call you otherwise before people!"

"The truth would not injure me half so much as this disguise, which makes you forget the respect you owe me, and for which you pledged your word."

"Be it so, Manuella," said the thoughtless young lord; and, with the greatest tenderness, he bent forward, as if about to kiss the girl in her boy's attire, but she turned quickly away, pursing her pretty lips firmly together.

By this time their voices, and the rustling in the room, had roused the attention of both Sir Tobias and Sir Harry. The latter advanced and exclaimed reproachfully, "My lord, how incautious you are!"

"Do not require me, at any rate, to creep back into that hole again," said the youth addressed, laughing.

"It is only his grace, the Duke of Buckingham, my brave friend," said Sir Harry.

Here the door opened, and Martin Bumpus entered with two massive candelabra, which bore each of them ten large wax candles. "Dr. Hewitt has just come, sir," said he.

The vicar, on his entrance, was introduced to Sir Harry Slingsby by Sir Tobias, as a friend from whom he had no secrets.

"I am happy," said Sir Harry, "to become acquainted with such a scholar, and withal so loyal an adherent to the royal cause. Your name sounds well at Oxford."

"I almost blush, Sir Harry Slingsby, to hear myself so spoken of, gratifying though it is to know that I am not forgotten."

"You are looked upon there, as a calm discreet man, still clinging to the hope of a reconciliation between the hostile parties."

"It is a civil war," said the vicar, sadly.

"And for that reason a war which can only end in the complete annihilation of one party or the other. In a struggle between nations, policy or the voice of prudence may be listened to; but in a war like this, between citizens of the same kingdom, nothing is left but the naked sword. These despatches which I

carry about me," and here Slingsby touched his chest, "will bring this miserable war to an end, and restore the crown to the King."

"Oh, burn them, destroy them ! Sir Harry, they may cost the King his crown, and much more, perhaps. Do you think that England, the bulwark of Protestantism, will ever open its gates to Catholic hordes, or submit to see its soil desecrated by foreign foes ?"

"Dr. Hewitt," interposed the Knight of Childerley, passionately, "you know not what you are saying. In a war like this against the Lord's anointed, all means are lawful."

"All," replied the vicar, "except treachery to one's country."

"God help me !" cried the knight, "if I would not rather be a Frenchman than yield an inch to this rebel Parliament."

The vicar here approached Sir Tobias, and laying his hand gently on his arm, said, "Remember your promise to the dead."

A change was immediately perceptible in the worthy knight, and controlling himself he said, "I shall always hold my opinion, though I am forced to stifle it, but I am thankful that, at least, I have a son, whom I can bring up in my own principles."

The entrance of Olivia and her brother, and their introduction to the Duke of Buckingham and his companion, put an end to further discussion. The two latter had been talking in a low voice at the other end of the room during the conversation of the gentlemen, but they now came forward.

"George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham," said Sir Harry Slingsby.

The vicar bowed respectfully to the young duke, the son of the once powerful favourite of two monarchs, who, though inheriting from his father the proudest title, and from his mother the largest possessions of any English subject, was now no better than an outlaw and a beggar. At the age of sixteen, fired by the spirit of loyalty, he had thrown up his studies at Cambridge, and presented himself at the camp of the Royalists, upon which all his estates had been confiscated by the Parliament. He received his baptism of fire on that glorious day when Prince Rupert with a handful of men took the fortified town of Lichfield, and he displayed an undaunted courage amidst the murderous flank and cross fire. He afterwards travelled in France and Italy, and then, either from love of adventure

or loyalty to his King, went over to Amsterdam, where Sir Harry Slingsby met him at the house of the wealthy Jewish banker, d'Acosta, who transacted the Queen's affairs. They afterwards returned to England together, and had been concealed at Childerley House, till they could pursue their journey to the royal camp.

The graceful young mistress of the house extended her hand to the duke, upon which he pressed it gallantly to his lips, and she then turned to welcome the timid boy who stood by him, and who, with his exquisitely moulded features, and dark southern eyes and hair, resembled a rare and beautiful exotic plant. The whole figure expressed shrinking timidity, and Olivia drew back for an instant; but with all the delicacy of a woman's tact, she quickly recovered herself, and gave her soft hand to the boy.

"His grace's page," said Sir Harry, turning slightly towards him, and Olivia felt the hand within her own tremble at these words.

"Allow me to add that he is my friend as well as my page, and will be my comrade as soon as we reach the camp."

It would be difficult to say how the duke

meant these words ; for whenever he opened his mouth there was a sarcastic expression in his face which formed a strong contrast to the frank character it bore in repose. There was always a conflict going on between his mouth and his eyes, and it was difficult to tell which would gain the victory.

“My page,” he continued, “is but moderately acquainted with our language, and therefore I must be his interpreter. His father was a Spanish nobleman, who fell in the French wars, leaving his family in sorrow and misery.”

Sir Tobias looked pityingly at the boy, though he cordially disliked the Spaniards, and led his son, who was fifteen years old, up to him.

“What is his name, my lord ?”

“Manuel.”

“Manuel,” repeated the knight, patting the boy on the shoulder ; “that is a pretty name, though somewhat foreign.”

The boy shrunk from the squire’s notice, and blushed up to the roots of his hair.

Meanwhile Olivia had stepped up to the vicar and said in a low voice, “Oh, I am so glad you are come, for you are the only one

to whom I can speak freely. If my father, knew upon what my thoughts are always occupied ! Tell me, oh, do tell me if you have any news of Elizabeth —— ?”

The vicar seemed much moved at the mention of this name, but he looked at her fixedly, and placed his finger on his lips as if to enjoin silence. Indeed, there was no time for further conversation, as Martin Bumpus appeared at the door of an ante-chamber with the announcement that dinner was on the table.

The room to which the party now repaired looked upon the courtyard, and had formerly been used as an armoury. The walls on both sides were covered with swords, shields, battle-axes, and mediæval arms.

The table was bountifully laden with all that Martin Bumpus could produce upon so short a notice ; and oak chairs, with backs beautifully carved, were placed before each cover for the guests, the duke's page standing, as was seemly, behind his master's chair.

Olivia sat opposite her father, and on the wall behind her hung an oil painting, which, though more than half a century old, retained all its freshness of colour, and represented a

noble lady of the time, and in the costume of the Tudors, with the broad ruff and stiff brocaded dress.

Dr. Hewitt said grace, and all present joined in the "Amen," with the exception of the page, who never moved his lips, but gazed restlessly around.

"What is the matter with your Don Manuel? God forgive me, if he does not look like the devil when he beholds the Cross," whispered Sir Tobias to the duke, who sat on his right hand.

"You forget," replied the duke, "that he is from a Catholic country."

"For my part," said the worthy knight, "I have nothing to say against the Catholics, provided they join the cause of the King and the Throne without falsehood or cunning. But Catholic or not, I do not see why he should object to joining in the 'Amen' like any other Christian."

The knight was too intent upon the rites of hospitality to pursue the subject: he plunged the large fork into the juicy roast beef before him, and cut slice after slice, proving at once his good heart and his appreciation of his guests' appetites.

Although this was the first time Olivia had appeared in the character of hostess, she acquitted herself with so much sprightliness and grace that it was impossible not to admire her.

"It is wonderful," said Sir Harry Slingsby, looking at her with a pleasant smile, "how much you resemble the picture behind you."

"Is that picture hanging there still?" cried Sir Tobias, angrily, putting down the goblet that he was about to raise to his lips. "I told you," he said, turning to Martin, "that I never wished to see it again, and yet you have not removed it."

"Forgive me, dear father," interposed Olivia, "but you know this picture was very dear to my mother."

"So much the worse," continued the knight; "it embitters the present to me, and changes every drop of my wine into poison."

"She is my benefactress, dear father," said Olivia, intimidated, but not silenced by her father's tone, "and was as a mother to my dear mother."

"And the mother of that villain," roared Sir Tobias.

"Stop, my friend," said the vicar, trying to-

calm him. "She is descended from the House of Stuarts, and so there is royal blood in her veins, and whatever the faults and errors of her son may be, he certainly does not deserve the name you give him."

"Of whom are you speaking, gentlemen?" asked Sir Harry, now joining in the conversation.

"Of—of—God help me, Sir Harry, but the name won't pass my lips."

"Of OLIVER CROMWELL," said the vicar.

A pause ensued. It was as if, at the sound of that name, a distant clap of thunder had shaken the heavens. Then Sir Harry began to laugh heartily. "Ha, ha, ha!" cried he, in high good humour, as if he had heard a capital joke, "if you are only speaking of that breeder of sheep, who in one night has been metamorphosed into a powerful general, you and I, Sir Tobias, need not, in all truth, trouble ourselves much. He and his soldiers will come to the same end as his cattle did formerly. Ha, ha! Noll, with the red nose!" He shook with laughter, and took a long draught from his goblet.

"You are much mistaken," said the vicar gravely. "Would to God that you and his

enemies had anything like a right appreciation of the man at whom you are pleased to laugh so heartily. You look upon him as a fool, but, I tell you, he is a wise man, and more than that, a great man."

"Your reverence seems very intimately acquainted with his Majesty's enemies," said Sir Harry.

"Indeed, I do know Cromwell," continued the vicar: "I have often seen him, and often talked with him. At the time I speak of, he was almost unknown; a member of Parliament, of whom little was heard, but about whom it was customary to laugh and joke whenever his name was mentioned. I never laughed, however; for there was something about the man that struck me forcibly, long before I had exchanged a word with him. I have often met him, walking under a grey autumnal sky, in the stubble fields, or in the meadows of St. Ives, and have stopped to look after him. He did not notice me, for he was generally deep in thought and prayer, and so earnest were his words to the Lord, that I could hear them amidst the rustling of the wind, and my heart trembled at their gloom and power. I have seen him weep as I never yet saw any man else, lamenting over his own sins, and the sins

of the time ; wringing his hands, and entreating God to grant some sign of forgiveness. I have watched him till he disappeared in the rising mist, and a mysterious feeling came over me, as if I had seen the spirit of the future passing by."

At this moment the blast of a trumpet was heard, and the young duke looked round alarmed, whilst Sir Harry grasped his sword.

"With your permission, Sir Knight, it is only the watchman of the tower blowing the ninth hour," said Martin Bumpus.

"No, Sir Harry," proceeded the vicar, "do not think so meanly of Oliver Cromwell ; and you, my worthy friend," turning to the squire of the Castle, "do not forget on what a footing of affectionate friendship you formerly were. Let us retain a little respect for what once was dear to us."

"On that day, when he, whose name I will not utter, set up his banner against his sacred Majesty, our friendship was blotted out, and from that time I ignored the relationship existing between us," replied Sir Tobias.

"But your child's name must always remind you of its existence."

"Olivia !" cried the knight, looking sadly

at his daughter. "Ah! those were better times; then we dwelt together like good neighbours, our wives loved each other like sisters, and we were as brothers. How often have we traversed together the short distance between Childerley House and Slepe Hall, and what a bright day that was, sixteen years ago, when he gave you his name, my child!"

There was a glitter in the good man's eyes as he said this, like the pale light which sometimes plays round rainy clouds.

"When Olivia was seven] years old, she passed one short but happy year at her aunt's house at St. Ives, and formed the most tender, sisterly affection for Elizabeth, the most beautiful and gifted of Cromwell's daughters."

The vicar sighed almost inaudibly, and then exclaimed, as if wishing to evoke the past: "St. Ives! When I hear that name, a happy calm comes over me. I see once more the little old town, with its market-place, surrounded by houses; again in fancy I stand on the stone bridge; below me flow the waters of the Ouse, and as I gaze up the stream, I see gable-ended houses on the banks, with red walls and quaint little windows. The broad stream winds picturesquely through the

marshy country, and in the back-ground are groups of trees, whilst amidst the mass of foliage rises the slender white church-tower of All Saints, of which I was at that time assistant curate. A pleasant path, with hedges and elm trees on either side, led from the market-place and High Street of the little town to Slepe Hall, a small estate which Cromwell had inhabited ever since he had been at St. Ives. Surrounded by thick foliage, it stood on the borders of a piece of water, and commanded an extensive view across meadows and pasture-lands, to the distant horizon. The peace of God seemed to rest upon the house; the deepest affection subsisted between the master of the house and his worthy spouse, whilst his demeanour towards his aged mother was marked with the greatest reverence. Confidence and love reigned also between the father and the children. 'Behold,' I said to myself, 'a picture from the Bible!' and I then learned to understand this man, who had appeared so enigmatical to me, when I saw him in his solitary walk wrestling for peace. He had found it in his faith and love."

"I am only astonished," cried Sir Harry,

sarcastically, "that this lion of the tribe of Judah did not prove more dangerous to the person of your reverence, as well as to the church principles which you profess."

"On the contrary, Sir Harry," replied the vicar, quietly. "It was in my intercourse with this man, from whom I differ so widely on many points, that I learned the full significance of that much contested word, 'Tolerance.' 'I respect God's house as much as any one,' I have heard him say; 'but external splendour does not honour the Lord, nor painted windows make a man any better than he would have been without them.'"

"There it is!" broke in Sir Harry—"whoever attacks the priest's vestments and the altar, attacks the King, and until Puritanism is rooted out, trunk and branch, there will be no peace in the kingdom. Away with it, therefore, with fire and sword, that is my opinion!"

"Alas! that it should be; but as Cromwell said to me, 'this is a quarrelsome age, and the struggle is the more deadly because difference of religious opinion lies at the root of it. But woe to that state, which in the choice of its servants, looks to their *form* of

creed, and not to their conscience to be loyally served.' ”

Sir Harry laughed scornfully. “ You would have no objection then to see this Oliver in the King’s service ? ”

“ Far from it. On the contrary, it is my most fervent wish.”

“ Recollect the scaffold on which Laud perished.”

“ And you, Sir Harry, that on which Strafford fell—‘ *Nolite confidere in principibus et filiis hominum, quia non est salus in illis.*’ These were almost his last words.”

“ You go too far, sir.”

“ Not farther than my conscience bids me. I do not see anything either impolitic or unseemly in securing the services of a great opponent, if by that means the country is saved. It is no longer a question of party, but a question of existence. Cromwell is a *man*, and it is the misfortune of our party that a *woman* is at its head.”

Sir Harry sprang to his feet in a paroxysm of rage ; the young duke also had waxed warm, more however in consequence of the fiery wine he had imbibed, than from the exciting conversation. He unfastened his

shoulder-belt, and gave it to his page to hang up against the wall.

The vicar, generally so gentle and conciliating, had been carried away by the heat of the subject. His face was white, his lips trembled, and his eyes were fixed, as though he saw some dreadful object in the distance. Then a sad smile lighted up his features, and with emotion he said :

"Calm yourself, Sir Harry. The shadow of Laud's and Strafford's scaffold falls upon your path as well as mine, and who can tell whether, if we each remain true to our inmost convictions, we may not meet again?"

He rose at these words, seized the goblet at his side, and touching Slingsby's glass with it, exclaimed: "Long live his sacred Majesty, Charles the First!"

At this moment a fearful noise was heard; the page, in hanging up the shoulder-belt, had loosened some of the decaying fastenings and handles, and something glittering, broad and sharp, fell to the ground. It was a battle-axe. At the same time the watchman's horn resounded loud and shrill, like a cry for help.

"For God's sake! let us see what that means," cried Sir Harry.

The knight of Childerley rose hastily, and threw open the window, which looked into the courtyard.

“It is too late,” he exclaimed.

The whole court was filled with a turbulent crowd of men, and with innumerable little lights, which moved to and fro over their heads. As far as the faint light would permit one to distinguish, it was nothing but a beggarly mob: they were all, however, flocking round a standard, and were armed with cudgels, scythes, hay-forks, and threshing-flails. The noise of their voices and the clatter of their arms ascended up threateningly to the illuminated window, from the hitherto peaceful courtyard.

CHAPTER III.

THE MEN OF NO-PARTY.

THE knight made a sign to his guests to withdraw to the further end of the room, and then leaning over the window, cried out,—

"Who are you, and what do you want?"

"Zounds!" replied a voice of the deepest bass, the possessor of which you involuntarily pictured as a man of wild exterior, with a somewhat red nose, shaggy hair, and a decided love for strong potations; "you ask too much at a time. It is for me rather to require you to show your *legitimationem ad litem*. My message is addressed to a highly respectable person, and treats of confidential matters."

"Not so many words, my friend, but let me hear to whom your message is addressed."

“Well, since you call me your friend, you shall have it without further delay. Step forward, ye foresters of Diana! ye darlings of the moon! and hold your lanterns low, so that I can see to read this paper.”

Thus apostrophised, several men came forth from the dense mob and formed a half circle round the speaker, lowering their lanterns so that the full light fell upon his face surrounded with its bushy hair, and made him look, to the squire standing above, like a glowing coal in a wisp of hay. He pulled a large letter from his pocket, and read as follows:—

“To the Honourable Sir Tobias Cutts, Knight of Childerley, in the hundred of Chesterton, and county of Cambridge.”

“Good friend,” cried the knight, when he had heard thus far, “that letter is for me; but before I can receive it you must tell me in whose name you are acting, and what you and your men mean by thrusting themselves into my court at this unseemly hour.”

“Sir Tobias,” replied the leader, “you have the habit of asking too much at a time: it would be far more to the purpose if you would provide something for us, for my tongue cleaves to my palate, and my brain is

getting as weak as my legs with fasting and marching."

"Poor fellow," said the knight, whose kindness was easily excited, "you would be the first who entered and left Childerley House in such a state; but I like to know with whom I share my food, and you must declare roundly that neither you nor your party belong to the people of the Parliament."

The leader turned and repeated the knight's question to his men. Immediately resounded from a hundred voices a loud—"No, no; we don't fight for the Parliament."

"God be praised!" said the knight, in the joy of his heart; "then of course you are Royalists?"

Again the leader turned round, and again was echoed through the court—"No, no; we don't fight for the King."

For a moment the knight was dumb with anger and astonishment.

"What," he cried, when he had recovered his voice, "you are neither for the King nor for the Parliament; for whom are you then?"

"We are the men of No-Party," said the leader, "and our motto is 'Peace to him who desires peace, and War to whoever attacks

us.' We make war for the sake of peace, our war is against war."

"For God's sake who *are* these men?" asked Sir Tobias, turning from the window to Sir Harry Slingsby.

"It is not the first time I have met with them," replied the latter: "they are a portion of the club-army of Wiltshire and Dorsetshire, armed with clubs instead of principles. Impoverished farmers, famished peasants, and such like. Capital food for powder, however, if we could get them to serve in his Majesty's army. Let us have the leader up; there is plenty for him, and I am curious to see his face, for really what we heard was more like the growls of a stomach than the words of a human being. He will become more human when he smells the roast beef."

"Right," said Sir Tobias; "I believe hunger is the enemy of mankind, and that the wolf itself would not be so savage if it was crammed full. Come up, my man," he cried, going to the window, "come, and fall to, and bring your papers with you."

This invitation fell like music on the ears of the poor wight. He stroked down his dishevelled hair, and then pointing to the

kitchens below, where huge fires were burning, he said to his men,—“In these castles, where there is cooking enough for one, there is enough for a hundred.”

Martin Bumpus now appeared at the kitchen door, followed by several men and women-servants, carrying large baskets of bread, and dishes containing food of all kinds, and huge flasks of beer. The men of No-Party then encamped in a circle round the courtyard, and planting their staves with the lanterns in their midst, ate and drank to their heart's content, thanking God and praising the good squire, whose saying was thus verified, “A full man, a good man.”

Their leader, meanwhile, had been shown into the room where the knight and his guests were assembled. His hair had fallen over his eyes again, and he blinked like an owl at the dazzling light. The first thing his eyes did take in was the excellent roast beef, and by its side a gigantic fork.

“My respects to all present,” said he, and seating himself, he seized the fork, and spitting a large piece of meat on the top of it, swallowed it in less time than it took to follow his movements.

Having done this he looked beyond the table, and the glorious things on it, at the various persons in the room, and the result of his examination was to make him lay down his fork, a most noble act of self-denial.

"Why, my man," cried Sir Tobias, in the best of humours, "you have been using the carving-fork. Take this," he added, "this is smaller, and here is a goblet of wine."

The bashful stranger drank it at a draught.

"Thank God !" said the squire, "his thirst is as great as his appetite."

"*Ad unguem super naculum,*" said the general, whose uniform consisted of a torn smock-frock, and his armour of a hunting knife, a saddle pistol, and a bludgeon ; his only distinguishing badge being a white ribbon bound round his left arm. "*Super naculum,*" he repeated, turning the goblet down, in which not a drop was left.

"You are a Latin scholar," said Sir Harry Slingsby, eyeing, not without satisfaction, his powerful frame.

"A very poor one, sir," he replied : "what I learned in the Charterhouse I forgot in the Inner Temple."

"What, a man of law as well !"

"Have been, sir, have been," he answered, in a melancholy tone, taking a large piece of meat on his fork.

"But how then did you come to be the commander of such a ragged army?"

"In a roundabout way, sir," he said, illustrating his words practically by describing a wide circle with his arm, in order to reach a bottle of wine at the further end of the table. The duke's page had moved nearer the light to make room for his movement, and the man noticed him for the first time. The sight seemed to strike him, for he suddenly stopped short, laid the bottle and fork down, and passed his hand across his forehead, as if trying to remember something. It was but for an instant, however; the next moment both hands and jaws were in full activity. He raised his bumper, exclaiming, "This is to the noble knight and his house, which has granted hospitality to Jürgen, the man of No-Party."

"So you are called Jürgen," said the knight, acknowledging the toast; "an odd name for an Englishman."

"My father did not give it me, sir; I brought it from Germany, where they object

to the name of George as much as you do to Jürgen."

"Who are you really, then, if I may be allowed to ask?"

"The son of a master tailor, and alderman of Cheapside, in the city of London, and most unjustly disinherited by my father."

"So, disgusted both with justice and injustice, you have become a man of No-Party," interposed Sir Harry; "but I'll lay any wager that as regards food, you fared better with the men of justice than with your present party."

"You may be right, sir, but it is a glorious thing to suffer want for one's opinions," seizing his fifth bottle of wine, for fear he might be taken at his word. "But don't be hard upon my people: they are brave trusty fellows, although, as Falstaff would say, 'They look as ragged as Lazarus on the painted tapestry.'"

"Why, you speak of our divine William of Stratford as though he were an old acquaintance of yours."

"And so he was, sir. No husband and wife could have loved each other better."

"What!" cried Sir Harry, visibly delighted,

"then you have been an actor, and one of his Majesty's servants?"

"Have been, sir, have been."

"And in what theatre, may I ask?"

"In the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane."

"Which was closed by the Parliamentary rascals in 1642," said Sir Harry, "because the hypocrites said 'that prayer and fasting were more effectual in turning away God's wrath.'"

"May the wrath of God consume them all!" cried the knight of Childerley. "Prayer and fasting, indeed. Here, my friend, is a fat capon and another bottle of wine."

"I cannot eat any more," said Jürgen, with some dejection; "but give it to me—it will do for to-morrow, *item a capon*, as Poins says in the first part of Henry IV.," and he thrust the roasted bird into his pocket.

"How comes it," said Sir Harry, "that you are not at the camp at Oxford?"

"Fate, sir, fate; every man has a fate. When we poor actors were driven from London by the sheriffs and the justices of peace,—my God-fearing father amongst them,—we escaped in a herring-boat to the Hague, and about a year ago we performed at the house

of the rich Jew, José Da Costa, at Amsterdam, in honour of the visit of Queen Henrietta Maria of England, to that city."

The duke's page, who evidently understood more English than his master had intimated, listened to Jürgen's last words with breathless interest.

"What are you staring at?" cried Buckingham, angrily; for Jürgen certainly availed himself of every opportunity of looking at the page.

"Your grace must excuse me," apologised Jürgen, "but your page's face reminds me of a Jewish maiden, who sat in the front row the evening we performed at the rich Jew's at Amsterdam. They said she was the daughter of the house, and she kept her large dark eyes fixed on me, so that I could not act at all. I was sad when I ought to have been merry, and merry when I ought to have been sad."

"What on earth has all this to do with your story?" broke in Sir Harry.

"A great deal, sir. Bewitched by her black eyes, I remained in Amsterdam when all my companions had left, and slunk every night round the house of the cursed Jew for the

sake of his lovely daughter. In Amsterdam the Jews are treated very differently to what they are in London ; there they have their houses and synagogues, and are considered as good as any Christian. I passed a miserable time, till at last I was summoned before the Council because I could not pay my score at '*The Crowned Ox.*' So I fled the country and entered the service of the German Emperor ; but the war was then at its last gasp ; my predecessors had been hewing and hacking so bravely for five-and-twenty years that nothing was left for us to do. The cavalry regiments were marching on foot because they had eaten up their horses, the villages were reduced to ashes, and not a living hen was to be seen for miles round. We beat a retreat after our defeat at Freiburg, through the Spanish provinces, and embarked at Dunkirk on a ship bound for London, but were thrown during a tempest on the south coast of England, where war was then at its height. Prince Rupert, or Prince Robber, as they called him, had laid the country waste from one end to the other. Hurrah ! for Prince Robber, as they called him, friend and foe, all were alike to him. I wanted to fight my

way through to him ; 'a ragged fellow and a polished musket,' was his expression, borrowed from Tilly in the German war. Things had altered very much since I had been away ; the army of the Parliament was no longer the slovenly, ill-trained band of men that it had been under Essex and Manchester. A new general had risen, called Oliver Cromwell. I knew the man well, for I had often seen him at my father's house, when they held the conventicle there, but I never thought that that man, who looked like a peasant, and spoke like a minister, would ever become a military man. Yet they said wonderful things about him : how he had recruited his army from the various counties and boroughs ; and how they prayed, sang, and conquered ; how they wore suits of mail which rendered them almost invulnerable, and stood as one man in the steadfastness of the Lord, whilst the musket balls rebounded from them like hailstones. This is what I heard of Cromwell's Ironsides. But their discipline is very severe, they say, sir. Plunder is forbidden on pain of death, and whoever makes too free with a woman is hung up. This would not suit me ; for a soldier must have freedom. Why, if you

strike up a country dance you are arrested ! a bag-pipe and a psalm—that's *their* martial music."

"Bravo, my man !" cried Sir Harry, "you can have better than that, if you choose—cornets and kettledrums. Come ! when shall we see you at Oxford ?"

"I must have time to think, sir, and hear what my comrades say. The air is full of principles ; one breathes them without knowing it. My thoughts pass like spies from one camp to another, and my heart is a born deserter, but I will think of it, sir."

Jürgen now bethought himself of the document which was the occasion of his visit to Childerley House, and drawing it forth, presented it to the squire. It was written in the form of a command, though couched in the most courteous terms, and requested the loan of fifty pounds sterling, in the name of the treasurer of the League, to be paid over to the bearer, and as the signatures were those of loyally disposed clergy and nobility, the squire assented to the demand.

"You shall have the money early to-morrow," said Sir Tobias ; "but you and your

people must accept the hospitality of Childerley for the night."

"Thankfully, sir, and you will find Jürgen has a faithful memory for all kindness."

"And where are you to march to-morrow?" asked the knight of the Castle.

"Our direction runs, Hatley Hall, Bedfordshire."

"Capital!" said Sir Tobias, turning to Sir Harry, "that is your way too; could you not turn it to your advantage?"

"At any rate," replied Slingsby, "we will take care that this troop joins the procession to-morrow. It will do no harm, if we can induce these men to shoulder the King's musket, instead of the threshing-flail."

The vicar now rose, saying that it was time for him to return to the village, and taking an affectionate leave of Olivia and the squire, he bowed courteously to the rest of the company, and retired.

"There goes an upright man, with whom I cannot be angry, though he often pains me," said the squire.

"Hang him!" cried Sir Harry, "I don't like people who are always saying unpleasant things. In their uprightness they anticipate

evil, like prophets of misfortune ; that is not the way to succeed. The battle is lost to the commander who does not believe in victory. Good-night, Sir Tobias, good-night ! we shall meet in the early morning."

Sir Harry retired to dream of his beautiful place in the north of England, of his children, and of his return home to fresh happiness, after hard-won triumphs.

CHAPTER IV.

MANUELLA.

“**A**T last, Manuella!” cried the young duke, seizing the fragile pliant little figure, and raising it in the air; “I feel as if I must do something: stamp on the floor for joy, or burst open the window and cry out exultingly, long live freedom! or kiss you. Oh, Manuella! what shall I do to show you how happy I am, and how much I love you?”

They were both in a room not much larger than Sir Harry Slingsby’s, and which communicated with it by means of a secret stair-case, or rather ladder, which ran up between the walls, close by the chimneys, from the top to the bottom of the castle. A small iron lamp hung on a nail from the low rafters, imparting to the room that dim light which increases the limits of space, and by divesting

objects of much of their reality, presents them in richer and more glowing colours. A ray of light in the midst of the encircling darkness fell upon Manuella's figure, revealing all its graceful curves and outlines, and causing her to appear more lovely than ever in the eyes of the duke.

"Manuella," cried the duke, "you are silent."

"You promised to protect me," said she, with that soft voice which was as much a part of her whole being as the clear sound of the bell is to the crystal. "I have not followed you from love; you appear to forget *that*."

"Yet it is impossible, Manuella, to see you without loving you," pleaded the youth, extending his arms towards her. "My heart has been all on fire for you ever since I first saw you."

"Do you think that is the way to win mine? You do not know me, George Villiers. The few hours we have spent in company to-day have given me a glimpse into your soul, which has revolted my whole being; for a man who can utter falsehoods with such ease is capable of any base action."

“You would have preferred, then, that I should have confessed the whole truth to the knights?” said Buckingham.

“I have told you that this disguise is intolerable to me, and it is most unlike a Cavalier to wish to take advantage of it. Away with this masquerade which makes me hate myself. I thought it was to a Cavalier I was speaking, when I made you the confidant of my secret in Amsterdam, but I see that in order to make you *feel* the respect you owe me, I must be myself again,” and she endeavoured to strip off the velvet doublet which fitted tightly to her figure, as something unworthy of her, the touch of which wounded her.

She grew furious as she met with resistance, and struggled with the garment as with a foe. Her face glowed with passion, her hair fell about her head; she showed her teeth,—small, exquisite teeth, like white enamel. At last she unfastened the dark blue velvet from her arms and shoulders, and flung it across the room with such force, that the silver trimming flashed like lightning against the wall, and then the upper part of the panting girl’s figure was enveloped only

by a fine, almost transparent, cambric. The blood mounted to the young duke's brain, as he thus beheld her ; her charms enhanced by her present state of excitement. Everything danced before his eyes.

"Manuella !" he cried, "you shall be mine ; I swear it by my soul !"

The girl looked at him earnestly and sadly.

"Do not," she said, "forswear your soul so lightly. Do you imagine that a daughter of the Da Costas would ever submit to be the plaything of your caprice ?"

"The house of your fathers lies far behind you."

"But the purity of its name is ever with me, and rests in my own hands."

"Bah !" said the duke, "no one will believe you. Your flight will be spoken of as it appears to the world."

"More reason, therefore, for showing the world that it is mistaken. Oh !" cried she, casting her eyes upwards, and crossing her arms upon her breast, "I have caused my father great grief, but I saw no other way of escape from an unhappiness worse than death. How often have I gazed on the deep waters flowing beneath our windows, and longed for

them to cover me ; but such a death would have brought disgrace upon all those who bear my name, and would have been a dark stain never to be effaced. I chose rather to escape my fate by flying with you to England. I can at least return and vindicate myself, for my heart is as loyal as ever to virtue. This enforced disguise has made me timid for a while, but now I am myself again, and as proud as ever."

"Your pride is far better up here in this garret," said the duke, "than it would be in the halls below. The Knight of Childerley would not think much of it, for he is a staunch member of the Established Church, and what would he have said if—if—"

"Go on," said Manuella, gloomily : "I should like to see how much you would dare to say."

"Not against you, my sweet one," interposed the duke, drawing nearer to her. "You are so beautiful, nature has given you that patent of nobility which kings respect—"

"And knights as well ? No, no !" said she, with a scornful smile, "such a patent depends too much upon that peculiar good-will and favour which disgrace those who accept them."

I am ill at heart. Is it true that the Jews are treated differently in England? That vagabond, whom I recognized with terror the instant I saw him, dared to speak in a contemptuous manner of a people—"here her lips quivered so violently, she could hardly proceed; "a people composed of illustrious families, every man of whom is the son of a priest or a prince, and heir to a name more ancient than your oldest house of kings! Tell me, is it indeed true?"

"It is but too true," replied the Duke; "but here, my lovely one, is a hand ready to defend you against the prejudice of the world."

"You would indeed be so gracious, my lord duke!" said she, rejecting with dignity the hand which would have grasped hers.

"You must know we think differently in England upon these points to what you do in Holland, and you must fortify yourself to hear the whole truth, in order to measure the extent of my love for you. In this island, nothing is held in greater contempt and hatred than the name of Jewess."

"Jewess!" she cried, drawing herself up, whilst her eyes flashed. "Learn then, George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, that henceforth

my one aim and struggle shall be to prove to you, and to this island, that a Jewess may be hated, but will never suffer herself to be despised."

"Beloved!" pleaded the young duke, to whom the girl appeared more beautiful than ever, as she uttered these words, indignation for a holy cause deepening the brilliancy of her eyes.

"Away from me!" she cried, as he drew nearer to her.

"You do not mean to say, Manuella," continued the duke, "that you would repulse me at the price of my hatred? You do not wish to wound and lower me?"

"Do not speak of it;" she replied, more calmly than before, though still with decision. "When I left Holland, I tore myself from home, and from all I loved, to escape a danger which threatened me. Not a spark of love for you was in my breast when I took this sad step."

"But by God, and St. George of England! I built hopes upon it."

"And *thus* you would woo! you who call yourself a Cavalier, and bear the arms and inscriptions of the noblest treasury of the

past ; *thus* you would woo a woman's heart ! You would tread it in the dust that it might be yours more surely !"

"Not I, my beautiful one, not I," responded the duke, passionately. "When I first saw you in your father's house—why need I repeat it?—you know I loved you. I saw you in chains, which made you as unhappy as they made me. This misery bound us together, and I opened my lips, I spoke to you of my feelings, and you—"

"I ought to have bid you be silent."

"You did not do so, however, but asked me one day if I had the courage to render you a great service."

"And you replied that the sword of the Buckinghams was for the enemy, but their last drop of blood for the King and for women."

"I said so then, and I repeat it now. You spoke afterwards of your disguise ; it was you who first mentioned it."

"And could I give you a greater proof of my confidence ?"

"And I of my self-control ? Manuella, you know not what you ask of me. To love you as I love you, desperately, with passionate

longing, every drop of blood in me a rebel, each thought a traitor, each wish a spy, that flatters me with all your charms. Oh, Manuella ! oh, cruel one ! I can bear it no longer. See, I am at your feet ! Grant me the certainty that it is indeed yourself to whom I am pleading, and not a mere vision of the brain, which dissolves into air when I would clasp it to my breast !” and throwing himself on his knees before her, he flung his arms passionately around her.

“ You have a good memory, my lord duke,” said she in a tone which fell like ice on the vehemence of his emotion. “ You have recalled all that passed between us, when the arrival of Sir Harry Slingsby afforded us the desired means of flight ; but you have forgotten the words by which you pledged yourself to observe the most sacred respect towards a disguise so alien to my nature ; and that it was on this understanding alone that I accepted your escort.”

“ Can I do more than set you free, even though I have you in my arms ? Give me hope, however, for on that alone can I live.”

“ My lord,” she said, now somewhat softened, whilst she extended her hand to raise him

from the ground—for what woman can listen without emotion to the voice of true passion, though proceeding from a man she does not love?—"compose yourself, and do not render it impossible for me to be on friendly terms with you on the very threshold of my undertaking. My purpose was, to go to the Countess Dysart, to seek her protection, and perhaps also to beg her intercession with my father, whom she once knew well; but now I have a loftier aim, and one fraught with difficulty and danger, for I am a Jewess, and love Judaism!"

As she stood in that low room, lighted only by the dim rays of the little lamp, thus may a prophetess have felt the first dawning of her mission.

The duke drew back; he was almost afraid of her. Her presence assumed a character which had nothing in common with him and earthly desires. He saw no longer the woman, but the spiritual being.

"You tell me," Manuella proceeded, after a short pause, calmly pursuing her train of thought, "that the people whose daughter I am, are despised in this country."

"So much so," replied Buckingham, "that

they cannot possess either house or home. A solemn decree has banished them ; and for four hundred years no Jew has been permitted to set his foot on English soil. Should he venture, however, to do so, it must be with the greatest secresy, and he would be liable to every kind of insult and injury. Our laws have no justice for him, but only punishment. If he is found on the estates of some lord, the dogs can be set on him ; the house in which the Jews assemble for prayer can be torn down by the mob ; and even their dead can find no rest on English ground, for in this kingdom, no Jew is allowed to be buried."

Manuella's eyes kindled with indignation. " And I," she cried, " should I— ?"

" And you also," replied the duke, " without the especial protection that you enjoy, would not be more safe than the rest of your people ; and if Sir Tobias knew that Childerley House had harboured a Jewess, he would consider his castle desecrated, and look upon me as a sectary, which I most certainly am not."

Indeed he was not, for his whole religion consisted in scoffing at Puritanism, which, he said, was not fit for any gentleman to profess ; but any other religion he had not.

"And do all your countrymen think the same as the Knight of Childerley?" asked Manuella.

"All who are loyal subjects of his Majesty, and faithful members of the Established Church. But, of course, those who, like myself, have travelled in foreign countries, can make exceptions."

"Exceptions!" said Manuella, "and so, if I remember rightly, were all the great and good women spoken of in the Bible."

"What do you mean?" asked the duke, who was not much versed in the above-mentioned Book.

"I will explain myself," said Manuella. "You heard what that strolling actor, Jürgen, said, who, as soon as he perceived me, recalled only too well that evening when he and his companions were at Amsterdam. I sat in the front row of spectators, a princess on one side, and a queen—Henrietta Maria, of England—on the other. A ray of majesty fell on me, and my thoughts recurred to the kings from whom we were descended, and to the present kings of whom my uncles are the ambassadors in Amsterdam and Hamburgh. This visit of the Queen of England seemed like that of one

standing on an equal footing to another. How joyfully did we wave her a welcome from the balcony of our house, as her vessel, with its purple sails glistening in the sun, rode proudly along the deep waters of the Amstel, surrounded by hundreds of boats decked out gaily to receive her. How graciously did she respond to the greetings of the great personages of Amsterdam. But it was myself only she approached, kissing me on the forehead, and addressing me as her dear child."

"Well, and what of that?" asked the duke.

"Can a queen, so good and kind as she is, allow such unheard-of proceedings against an entire people?"

"You forget, Manuella, that our poor Queen is in exile, and can do little for others."

"But the King?"

"He will receive you graciously, that I can vouch for in his name, and I will conduct you as you wished to Lady Dysart, who is now at Oxford at the King's Court, where it is important for her Majesty the Queen to have a confidential friend. She is one of the most beautiful and intellectual women of the Court, and you can beg her to grant you shelter so

long as these stormy times render it impossible for me to do so."

"Do not speak of that, my lord ; my only wish once was to have gone to Lady Dysart, as I had seen her at my father's house, and to have remained with her until I could return home, but the God of my fathers has, perhaps, decreed a higher purpose for me. Oh, that He would touch the King's heart !"

"The King, my poor child !" cried Buckingham, almost in a tone of pity, "why, he has to chastise the rebels."

The room had now grown cold, and the lamp burned feebly. "I am shivering with cold," said Manuella.

The duke gave her a cloak which she wrapped around her, and then, seating herself on a low stool, she leaned her head against the wooden couch which occupied the lower end of the room. Not a word more was spoken, and all was so still that the rustling of the trees in the park below could be distinctly heard.

In an under-tone, Manuella repeated the evening prayer of the Jews, "In the name of the Everlasting, the God of Israel, on my right hand Michael, on my left Gabriel, before

me Uriel, behind me Raphael, and above my head the Glory of God."

Thus she fell asleep. The duke also sat down, but at a distance from her, on the threshold of the little door, with his sword across his knees. There lay the sleeping girl, no less lovely than before, defenceless, and the object still of his passionate desire. But between them stood the four champions, the archangels, and he dared not touch the maiden. He only gazed at her with half-veiled eyes, and thought he was dreaming until he really did dream, how long, he knew not. He was awakened by a noise in the court below, by the clang of horns and the voice of joyous song. He rose quickly, the golden light of spring had penetrated through the window in the roof, and fell on Manuella's dark locks, as she lay sleeping. Again resounded from below the merry chorus—

"Hail, bounteous May ! that dost inspire
Mirth and youth and warm desire ;
Thus we salute thee with our early song,
And welcome thee and wish thee long."

Manuella awoke. She opened her eyes in astonishment. "Where am I?" she cried, and started to her feet. The little room and all nature was bright with sunshine.

CHAPTER V.

WHAT HAPPENED IN THE FOREST.

IT was a lovely May morning. The rosy dawn, which had illumined the garret of Childerley House, fell in all its splendour on the forest of Longstow, bathing the top of the Sacred Oak in its golden light. It stood in the thickest part of the forest, but with an open space immediately around it, so that it could be seen in all its glory. Its massive branches, scarcely a man's height from the ground, spread out far and wide, whilst its roots were like hillocks around it, and had completely raised the soil. It stood like a king or patriarch, and numbered hundreds of years.

From time immemorial pilgrimages had been made to it from the different villages, as a form of faith, and it had become a proverb

to say "as true as the Sacred Oak in the forest of Longstow." All the days of the patron Saints had been celebrated under its shades, until the introduction of Protestantism into the country had banished such observances. Since then the Sacred Oak had been a rendezvous for dancing on all festive occasions.

The part of the forest in which it stood, was the converging point of three or four counties, and from it branched off paths in all directions, leading into Bedfordshire, Bucks, and Huntingdonshire. Here had Zedekiah Pickerling, the miller, summoned his pious confederates from the surrounding villages; and faithful to the cause had this little band of small farmers assembled during the night. They had grouped around the tree, whilst the miller himself had taken up his position on one of the huge knotted roots. He was regarded by them as a chosen vessel of the Lord, and they listened to his words with chattering teeth and pale faces, for the night had been cold, and their fast broken only by a psalm.

"Worthy brethren and dear friends," said the miller, "this will be a memorable day for

the Gospel of Christ throughout England. You know only too well the depravity of the parish whence we come, how God's commands are wantonly violated, and His saints ill-treated with impunity, whilst in every other part of England the strongholds of the evil-doers are broken up, and their goods divided amongst those who pursue a godly course. This knight, called Sir Tobias, like that pious man in the Bible, though he deserves rather to be named Barabbas, is allowed to flourish in his wickedness, like this oak tree, which stretches its branches defiantly to the heavens. Down with them both, I say, and up with Christ's Crown and the Covenant!"

"Up with Christ's Crown and the Covenant!" cried the men, brandishing the axes, which they had brought with them at the bidding of the belligerent miller.

"Yes," continued the latter, "we will lay the axe to the root of their unbelief, and their may-poles shall come down like this tree, which they blasphemously name after the Gospel. Down with it: I will deal the first blow."

And descending from the rooty hillock, he dealt a stroke at the tree, which splintered

some of the bark, the growth of hundreds of years, and shook the dew from the lower branches on the head of the zealous man. But a murmur arose amongst the assembly, for they all loved the tree, like some precious relic in the house of their fathers, and could not make up their minds to raise their axes against it.

"What," cried the miller, "you hesitate! you would be like that king of Israel, who built two altars, one to the true God, and the other to the abomination of the Ammonites. How long will you halt between two opinions?"

At the same time he raised his axe, and levelled a blow with all his strength against the trunk. This time the stroke penetrated to the timber.

"Our brother is right," said one of the men: "we must pull down, before we can build up. Is it not written, 'Thou shalt have none other gods but me?' Here goes another stroke."

A second wound gaped in the trunk of the royal tree.

"I can't do it," said a third, laying down his axe; "it's like aiming a blow at my own father; every stroke goes to my heart."

"Just listen to him," cried Zedekiah, scornfully. "Oh you of little faith! Think of that pious old man who was dragged through the streets of London at the cart's tail to the gallows at Tyburn, only because he had preached against bishops and archbishops, declaring them to be no better than Papists. I was as close to the old man as I am to this tree, and thousands had followed him weeping. His drops of blood fell to the ground, but he smiled at me in the midst of his agony as he noticed my blanched face. It is nine years ago, but to me it seems like yesterday."

The miller's words made a great impression on the already excited feelings of his audience, and blow after blow fell from all sides on the sacred tree, but though slashed and hacked about it still stood firm as a hero in the battle, whose suit of mail alone receives the barbed arrow. But the resistance they encountered did but redouble their zeal in the work of destruction, and they fortified themselves in turn with the drink and provisions they had brought with them. The echo of their strokes resounded through the quiet forest, when suddenly voices were heard in the distance, singing,—

"The summer and the may, oh !
The summer now is here !"

The miller pricked up his ears.

"There they are," he cried, "those children of Belial !"

The gentle breeze, laden with sweet odours, wafted the sound now far, now near.

"Every hedge and tree so green,
As in Paradise is seen.
Heaven's portals wide are thrown,
Bright our path in summer sun !"

"Just listen to them," cried Zedekiah, "how blasphemously they speak and sing ; but now they are given into our hands, and shall be put to shame on their own altar."

Herewith he swung his axe, and motioned to his companions to gather round him, so as to receive the enemy in battle array. The tramp of horses and the steps of many men were now distinctly heard, and the singing had come so near that the words of one of those sweet melodies, the charm of "merrie old England," could be distinguished. Zedekiah heard all this before he could see the procession, which in the circuitous route it had to take was hidden by the thick foliage of the trees, and only the glitter of various

metals shone here and there through the branches. *He* had formed one of the procession before his conversion, and had been the first to dance in the ring. Wild tricks enough he had played in those days, though he had felt a twinge of remorse on being refused by Hannah Greenhorn, the red-cheeked daughter of the landlord of the "Pig and Whistle;" and had quite taken to his Bible studies when the Knight of Childerley had threatened to turn him out of his mill, if he continued to give short measure and to weigh with lighter weights than the laws of England allowed.

The procession now turned into the path which led straight to the oak.

"There he is," cried Zedekiah, pointing to the figure which rode at its head. It was Martin Bumpus, dressed as Friar Tuck, in the brown garment of the bare-footed monks, with the quarter-staff over his shoulders. His face was stained a deep red, and whilst the others were merrily singing, he was muttering, with downcast eyes and folded hands, his "*Ora pro nobis.*" On his right rode Little John, a pleasant sight to look at, with his doublet and plumed hat; no other than

Hannah Greenhorn, whose red cheeks and constant giggle would alone have betrayed her. Then came the centre of attraction, Robin Hood, and his "Ladye Love," Maid Marian, represented by the young squire of Childerley, and his sister Olivia, who, as Queen of the May, was beautifully dressed in a garment of pale blue, over which fell a full mantle, embroidered with silver; whilst her golden hair, which hung in rich clusters over her neck and shoulders, was encircled by a wreath of white violets. Six foresters in their green tunics and with bugle horns, and six maidens in pale blue, with wreaths of primroses, surrounded the young pair. These were followed by troops of men and maidens, picturesquely attired, whilst crowds of villagers, and far behind them the men of No-Party, closed the procession. Directly Friar Tuck, alias Martin Bumpus, perceived the miller with his armed companions, he divined at once his hostile intentions. "Make room there," he cried, "or I will fell you to the ground with my quarter-staff!"

But the miller, who glowed with the most unholy wrath at the sight of these objects at once of his hate and love, was rendered au-

dacious by the confidence inspired by the axes of his companions. He made a sign to them to press forward to meet the enemy, and in this movement of the crowd, the gaping wound in the Sacred Oak became for the first time visible.

The brave Martin changed colour under his thick coat of paint, his heart beat, his lips quivered; he sprang from his horse, and flourishing his staff in the air, rushed upon the hypocritical miller, and seized him by the throat, crying, "Villain, what have you been doing?"

"Help!" cried the miller; "he is throttling me!"

The Puritans, who had stood terrified at the suddenness of the assault, now seemed about to come to his assistance, when Martin Bumpus, who felt doubly strong in his garb of Friar Tuck, called out, "Whoever comes near, I will knock him down with this staff, so that he will not want to get up again in a hurry!"

Here he stretched the miller on the ground with his left arm, whilst with his staff in the other, he laid about him right and left. Meanwhile a fresh troop appeared under the

green archway of branches, and unfurled a white flag, on which was written in large black letters :

“ Make way, at once, upon the spot,
Or clubmen’s blows will be your lot.”

This inscription did its work. The Puritans stopped short in their meditated advance, and looked at one another irresolutely, whilst the band of club-men formed in the rear, and their leader, Jürgen, betook himself to the scene of action.

“ Bravo, Mr. Cellarman !” he cried, “ pommel him well ; no one shall disturb you, I promise you ;” and he raised his cudgel threateningly at the Puritans standing by, and turned with eyes of loving approbation to the brave Martin, who had already won his heart by his abundant provision of food the day before.

“ The punishment is far too mild,” said Martin, foaming with fury. “ For every stroke that he has dealt to our beautiful oak, he shall have blow for blow. Oh ! we have a long reckoning to settle,” and he gave him a kick to make him get up.

Meanwhile the villagers, upon the news of the disaster which had befallen their beloved

tree, had clustered round Robin Hood and Maid Marian, and most singular was the effect of their sad and excited faces amidst the various fantastic costumes. Whilst they were all too much occupied with their own thoughts to pay attention to other people, a horseman in peasant costume rode up to the pretty Queen of the May.

"Farewell! dear young lady," said the horseman, who was no other than Sir Harry Slingsby in disguise. "The favourable moment has come for me to leave you. If all had been arranged for us beforehand, nothing could have been more propitious. Farewell! We may meet again at the court of our King, where we are not insensible to beauty and loyalty in misfortune!"

The duke, who was likewise attired as a countryman, took a gallant farewell of the graceful daughter of Childerley House, and then putting spurs to his horse, which reared high in the air, he made a sign to his page to follow him.

Manuella, who had thrown a blue blouse over her page's dress of velvet, rode a spirited black pony out of Sir Tobias' stables. Its forelocks fell completely over its eyes, which

sparkled beneath their shaggy curtain ; but fiery as it appeared, Manuella managed it with the greatest skill. She threw a parting glance of gratitude and sympathy at Olivia, who, in her turn, looked sadly after the boy, to whom she felt strangely attracted.

“ Follow me ! ” cried Sir Harry. “ We must gain the path yonder without delay,” pointing to the right of the half-splintered oak.

Zedekiah, meanwhile, had again been laid prostrate by Martin’s fists, and was lying motionless at the victor’s feet, watched by Jürgen. Suddenly he raised himself, stretched out his long neck, and dilated his nostrils, as though he scented something in the distance.

“ It is the clang of a trumpet,” he cried, and in truth a shrill sound could be heard in the opposite direction, accompanied by a continued murmuring like the rush of waters, but which, as it grew nearer, assumed a more decided tone. Zedekiah’s pale face glowed as he lifted his axe from the ground and forced his way through to his confederates, before the astonished Martin could prevent him.

“ Rejoice, ye saints ! it is the clang of Levi McAlister, Cromwell’s trumpeter,” he cried.

“ Cromwell’s Ironsides ! ” vociferated the

Puritans, as the tramp of horses was now distinctly heard, and the steel armour and scarlet coats of their riders shone through the pale green foliage. Simultaneously with the measured tread of their horses, voices could be heard singing, "I will praise Thee because Thou hast done it, and I will wait on Thy name, for it is good before Thy saints."

As the hymn gradually died away, the standard of the Parliament appeared amidst the May-day sun and verdure, a black cloth, on which were embroidered in brown, three Bibles, and the words, "God with us!"

The appearance of Cromwell's Ironsides completely altered the position both of friend and foe. By the miller and his party they were received first with prayer, and then with joyous acclamation, but amongst the merry May-day folk, their arrival caused a general dispersion. Many crept away, and then ran back to the village, proclaiming the disaster throughout their route, and greatly exaggerating it. A few only remained by the young Squire of Childerley and his sister, who maintained the position they had held from the first. Jürgen, on the other hand, ordered his men to advance: "Let your flags be seen, as

well as the white badge on your arms ; the one means war, the other peace, and they can have which they choose."

In the meanwhile the junction between the Puritans and Ironsides had taken place on the other side of the oak. The latter were an advance guard of a large troop of cavalry, under the command of Corporal Zosimus Rose, a substantial farmer from the neighbourhood of Stilton. These Ironsides, the offspring of the noblest strength of the people, were the representatives of England's wealth and intellect, and had voluntarily devoted their lives to restore to their beloved country the ornaments of liberty, justice, and faith, which had been so sacrilegiously attacked.

Sir Harry Slingsby, meanwhile, was too experienced a soldier not to profit by the general confusion to effect his escape, knowing, as he did, that should any collision ensue between Jürgen and the Ironsides, it must take place on the left side of the splintered oak ; whereas his course led him to the right. "Follow me," he cried, as his horse worked his way slowly and laboriously through the crowd of people that blocked up the path, none of whom, however, paid any attention to the rustic

horsemen, so many peasants, either on foot or horseback, having fled in all directions upon the approach of the troops.

Manuella's fiery little steed, excited as it was by the ever increasing noise, still allowed itself to be curbed, though it snorted, and sparks seemed to dart from its eyes; when, just as it was about to step through the slanting rays of the sun, along a narrow path leading to a clearer part of the forest, a pistol was fired, the report of which echoed loudly through the wood, and created a fearful commotion among the people. The pony reared, plunged violently, and throwing Manuella to a considerable distance against one of the knotted roots of the oak, started off at a mad gallop, passing Sir Harry Slingsby and his companion in its flight, and thereby directing attention to them. Bleeding and unconscious, Manuella lay on the ground.

"Unfortunate creature!" cried Slingsby, in his companion's ear. "But come, you are not dreaming of endangering the crown for the sake of a miserable boy? Come!" and he seized the bridle of the duke's horse.

"Ride on, and leave me, or by God—" and here Buckingham felt for his knife beneath

his smock-frock, "it is no boy, but a girl, and I love her!"

"By heavens!" cried Slingsby, "and a kingdom is to be lost for the sake of a miserable love affair!" and with all his strength he dragged Buckingham's horse so far into the forest, that when it did succeed in breaking loose, there was no longer time to turn back. Cromwell's dragoons, with the Puritans in the rear, had moved up the side path, and so barred the outlet.

"You shall pay me for this, you miserable country squire!" cried Buckingham, in the bitterness of his rage.

"In whatever coin you choose. Wretched boy! to have played this shameful trick upon me, and now to forget your murdered father and your King, for the sake of some miserable love intrigue!"

He then set spurs to his horse and rode off, leaving the duke to follow at his pleasure.

Both parties, meanwhile, on the scene of action, appeared far more anxious to go to the assistance of the poor boy, than to respond to the challenge for attack given by the pistol shot, but not one on either side ventured to leave the closed phalanx.

Olivia alone dismounted from her palfrey, and regardless of the broad sabres which flashed on her right hand, and of the scythes and cudgels which threatened her on the left, fearlessly approached the insensible figure. Kneeling down, she began to unloose the blouse and doublet through which blood was oozing from the shoulder, and was executing her task with tender skill, when she suddenly uttered a cry, and covered her face with both hands; it was but for an instant, however, and her next movement was hurriedly to unfasten her own silver-embroidered mantle and to throw it over the apparently lifeless form, for the leaders of both parties were coming towards her.

When Jürgen drew near and saw the white face, and the blood trickling through the silvery web, a mighty trembling seized him, he raised the light garment and gazed as if enraptured at the countenance.

"It is a maiden," he said, scarcely master of his voice, "and, by heavens! the Jewish maiden of Amsterdam."

Olivia alone heard the words, which came upon her like a flash of lightning. With an entreating look she turned to Jürgen.

"Do not breathe a word of this to anyone else, or she will be lost; it must be a secret between you and me."

Zedekiah's suspicious eyes and ears, however, always on the alert, had heard at least part of the secret.

"Zosimus," he cried, "those two countrymen on horseback were no real countrymen, but only Cavaliers in disguise, and the third, who by God's judgment lies smitten at our feet, is no boy, but a girl."

And he stooped to raise the mantle, but Jürgen sprang forward.

"Touch her, if you dare!"

"There!" resumed the miller, "is not that a proof of the truth of my words? and did I not tell you that Childerley House was hatching a conspiracy against us? Zosimus, why do you hesitate to attack these godless ones?"

"Why should I?" replied the corporal, feeling in his pocket for another piece of tobacco. "It is unnecessary; they are already in our hands."

And he pointed to the forest, where straight before them, and in the rear of the men of "No-Party," a second and far larger troop of horsemen was visible.

The clubmen were now shut in between two hostile lines, and Jürgen, with two or three other ring-leaders, instead of reaching the camp at Oxford, and there receiving his officer's commission, found himself disarmed and bound before he could offer the slightest resistance.

"*Sic transit gloria mundi!*" said he, as he patiently bore the thrusts of the carabine, with which a dragoon regaled him from time to time.

Short work was made with the whole band. Leashed together like dogs, they were driven back in a heap, and surrounded by a double row of red-coats and pawing horses. For weeks the troops had lain in ambush for them, for these club-men oppressed the country and molested the army.

"Convoy them on the road to Huntingdon," cried the commander of the cavalry troop, a young man of high military rank and distinguished bearing, who, even when called upon by duty to deeds of violence, never lost the expression of dignity and humanity. There was something winning and genial about him that at once attracted people, and which was quite consistent with

the severity and iron gravity with which he issued his commands. Beneath his glittering armour he wore a coat of the finest scarlet, profusely embroidered with gold and silver, and over his helmet waved the black and green feather of the Parliament.

"Let none escape!" he continued, "but keep them in Huntingdon till I come. I have full authority to deal with them. The three ring-leaders will be kept prisoners and brought before a court-martial."

Zosimus Rose made his military salute and gave the order to face about, just as the young colonel's eye fell on the group which still occupied the open space before the oak.

"What is that?" cried he in astonishment. "Is it a vision, a dream?—that girl with the golden hair in that fantastic costume, kneeling beside the prostrate figure covered with the silvery mantle?"

By her side stood a handsome lad, in the green dress of Robin Hood, and behind him a Capuchin monk, in the brown garb of Friar Tuck. The youthful commander gazed intently at these well-known figures from the old English legends, which although possess-

ing nothing in common with himself and his life, were none the less attractive.

He, in his turn, was also an object of observation. As he sat there on horseback, in his scarlet and gold uniform, he stood out conspicuously amongst the others. All gave place to him, who alone could control the uproar, and be supreme over the hostile and antagonistic elements. To him Olivia turned in her helplessness, as, pointing to the death-like figure beside her, she cast her eyes up to him imploringly for assistance, and met his gaze intently fixed upon her. She hastily averted her eyes, as if struck by a flash of light from futurity, too bright for her to bear without involuntary emotion, and a lovely colour dyed her face, which was bashfully held down.

The colonel had seen her movement, and throwing his horse's reins to the trumpeter, he swung himself out of the saddle with a grace peculiarly his own, and with a light step, in spite of his heavy riding dress, soon traversed the space that divided him from Olivia. His whole presence was expressive of strength, nobility, and manly beauty.

"He does not please me at all," said Zede-

kiah; "he has long curly hair, like Absalom."

"But a heart like David," was the reply of McAlister.

"Dear lady," said the colonel, in a tone which at once inspired confidence, "I do not venture to ask for any explanation of a mystery which engages my feelings far more than my curiosity." And he bowed most courteously and placed his iron-gloved hand upon his heart. "Command me only, and I am at your service."

Olivia was more embarrassed than ever, as she knelt before the knight with eyes cast down, looking the very impersonation of all that is touching, sacred, and beautiful in woman, whilst he, Frank Herbert, colonel in Cromwell's own regiment, the embodiment of pure and unselfish sentiment, and of every virtue that makes a true knight, stood before her silent and full of sympathy, awaiting her answer. It was but for a moment, however, that Olivia was rendered oblivious of her who so much required help, by an emotion which was so strange, so incomprehensible to herself—a flood of tears came to her relief.

"Save this unhappy creature," she cried :
"it is a girl !"

Frank Herbert's gaze, which had been hitherto exclusively occupied with Olivia, was now directed for the first time to the half-veiled figure on the ground. He stepped quickly up and raised the mantle which covered the unconscious maiden. He saw a white face, which, though death-like, was pervaded by that loveliness which plays around marble statues ; closed eyelids, and long, dark, silky lashes resting on the cheek, like a curtain concealing a world of love and beauty. Blood was trickling from the left shoulder, blood was on the white spotless breast.

"Good heavens ! she is bleeding still," he cried, almost in a tone of reproach.

He quickly unloosed the silken scarf which he wore across his breast, and bound it tightly round the shoulder of the wounded girl, and then, turning to the corporal, who had dismounted and stood beside him, bade him go in search of water.

With feelings of tender gratitude Olivia's eyes followed the handsome soldier, who a little while before had ridden so proudly at

the head of his regiment, and who was now so modestly rendering every assistance, and executing all that her heart prompted her to do, but circumstances made impossible.

Some moments of suspense ensued before the corporal returned with some water, during which the colonel read in Olivia's countenance the various shades of conflicting feelings passing through her mind in this brief interval, and as she gazed up at him with an expression of childlike confidence, he answered her with a reassuring smile,—“No, she will not die; no, indeed she will not.”

He took some water in the palm of his hand, and sprinkled it on the face of the apparently lifeless girl, and then drawing off his glove, knelt over her and bathed her temples. Slowly and reluctantly did life respond to the warm touch of his hand, as he felt the pulse in the delicately veined forehead. Absorbed in the contemplation of this man, a peaceful happiness like sunshine gradually filled Olivia's heart, and in the enthusiastic reverence of her disposition this soldier appeared to her as one sent from God to bring light and life. All fear was banished; she believed so implicitly that everything must

succeed that he undertook. And, indeed, his exertions were not to be without their reward.

It was a slow but mighty flowing back of that life which seemed to be ebbing away. He bent over her as if he would infuse his own breath into her lifeless form ; a waft, as of pure morning air blown from the sea-shore, responded to this, and a tinge of crimson flitted over the face. Involuntarily his lips touched hers, and two large dark eyes opened, and shone awhile like lights from another world, then closed once more, but a heavenly smile rested on Manuella's features. A half-smothered cry broke from Olivia's oppressed heart. What was the emotion that was thus reluctantly wrung from the newly-awakened heart of the maiden ?

How gladly would she have been ill, and wounded, to receive from *his* hand those tokens of sympathetic care !—how gladly have been lifeless, dead almost, to be awake by the touch of *his* lips !

The colonel now rose, and drawing on his glove and replacing his sword, said,—

"Dear madam, she is now restored to you and to life, but it will still be necessary, with all speed, to assist nature by other means."

Olivia trembled lest he should ask her the name of the wounded girl ; for how could she, the daughter of a Cavalier, betray the secret she had discovered ? And yet how difficult, nay, almost impossible, to conceal the truth if *his* lips were to question her ! But Frank Herbert was not the man to ask indiscreet questions, by which he might place himself and others in an embarrassing position. He noticed Olivia's discomposure and anxiety, as well as a certain contradiction in the sympathy she showed for the sick girl ; but with that tact and delicacy which proceeds from the heart, he forbore from further investigation, and contented himself with the belief that the girl in her boy's disguise was one of the May-day figures which had surprised him in the forest.

"You are very anxious about her, are you not ?" was his only question ; and the answer in the affirmative came from Olivia's very heart ; for she felt that the future of the stranger girl lay in her own hands, and she resolved to accept the responsibility.

"Where do you command that she should be taken ?"

"To Childerley House," replied Olivia, who

felt a sense of freedom in the noble presence of the young colonel, whose every look and act confirmed her in that confidence with which kindred natures regard one another.

"To Childerley House," he repeated, as he gave orders for a litter to be constructed from some of the branches of the trees, and for a cloak to be spread over it to form a couch. The wounded girl was then gently raised, and borne upon the strong shoulders of Cromwell's Ironsides.

"So, dear madam, you are the daughter of the Knight of Childerley, and therefore a relation, if I am not mistaken, of my own general?"

"It is as you say, colonel," she replied.

And with his help she mounted her pony, and then, at a sign from their commander, the whole cavalcade was set in motion.

Zosimus Rose, with his convoy of prisoners, had been long since on his road to Huntingdon; and Zedekiah Pickerling, angry at the reception he had met with from the colonel, had, with the Puritans, joined the vanguard, which had received orders to reconnoitre the road to Childerley.

Olivia's eyes and attention, as she rode



beside Frank Herbert at the close of the procession, were often directed to the troop at its head, immediately behind which the litter was carried ; but Frank Herbert, with innate delicacy, avoided all mention of a subject evidently painful to her, and sought rather to divert her thoughts from it.

He talked to her of the past, of Merton Hall, the seat of his ancestors, in the neighbourhood of Stilton, of his college days at Cambridge, happy days, from which he was summoned by the cry sent up for his beloved country.

He related with what feelings of melancholy he had quitted the lofty halls, the quiet courts and shady gardens of Christchurch, and how, in the twilight of a September evening, he had gazed once more upon the Gothic building, and upon the adjacent smaller college of Sydney Sussex, whose painted chapel window sparkled exquisitely in the setting sun, amidst the autumn verdure.

Two figures were ever before his eyes, that once had walked in the gardens of those colleges, then unknown one to the other, and without any presentiment of the future. One was a poet, the other a general, and both the

two great spirits of the age, destined at some future time to meet.

"Yes, I see it," cried Frank ; and a prophetic vision seemed to come over him, "though no one else may, that these men are destined to create, out of this distracted kingdom, lying in the throes of death, a new state, a renewed splendour, and to make it once more feared and respected by other nations. One will restore its beauty, the other its freedom. The thought of these men inspired me, and returning to the home of my fathers, I hoisted the standard of the Parliament and called upon my people to arm. Those are my farmers and tenants," he added, pointing to the redcoats, "the freeholders of my soil. I went to London to have my commission ratified by the Parliament, and then for the first time I saw the poet Milton. He was living in a garret ; his only luxury, his bookshelves ; and his one recreation, a harp, from which he gave forth most heavenly music. I returned to the country, and placing myself at the head of my dragoons, led them forth to the field. There I saw Cromwell. It was on the memorable occasion of Marston Moor. It had been a sultry day. Twilight was drawing on ;

heavy clouds took up their position in the heavens, whilst before us, on the plain, stood the hostile army. For a long while did the general hold in his men ; at last the threatening clouds moved towards each other, the thunder rolled, the lightning flashed, the rain and hail rattled against our coats of mail ; the angels of wrath descended. Then Cromwell gave the signal of attack, and amidst the roar of the tempest, we rushed forward, and in less than two hours the plain was covered with Prince Rupert's men, and Newcastle's infantry was cut to pieces."

A man, so refined and chivalrous as the colonel, would certainly not have dilated upon so delicate a topic to a lady well known for her royalistic predilections, had he not been cognisant also of her relationship to Cromwell.

Olivia heartily forgave him, for deep down in her own heart, she cherished a warm feeling for the man who had become so great and so formidable, but whom she had dearly loved in her childhood. Yet this consideration vanished before the emotion excited by the speaker himself. It was not so much what he said, but that it was he himself who spoke, that filled her heart, even at this early stage, with

a mingled feeling of pain and pleasure. Images of poetry and heroism, painted by his magic words, arose before her, and were interwoven with the songs and fragrance of the forest, shutting out from before her eyes the fatal abyss which she was slowly but surely approaching.

CHAPTER VI.

THE KNIGHT'S VOW.

MANY were the times during that morning that the Knight of Childerley climbed the stone steps leading to the watch-tower of his castle, whence a view could be obtained of the distant forest of Longstow. The May-day procession ought to have returned long before this, for the sun-dial was already pointing to the eleventh hour, and the groups of trees in the valley were beginning to cast broad shadows ; but neither step nor voice of man fell upon the knight's listening ear. The stone parapet of the tower on which he stood glowed with the heat of advancing day, and no banner unfurled in the breeze lent its grateful shade as it once had done, for since the lowering of the royal standard the flagstaff had remained as bare as a tree in winter.

At last the good knight, taking his plumed hat and silver-mounted staff, set out in the direction of the village, but it was not until he had turned into the hilly path, bordered with hawthorn hedges, which opened out upon the church green, that he first perceived some of the people who had taken part in the morning's festivity. They were gathered round the vicar, who had hastily left his quiet study to learn the cause of the extraordinary noise and confusion ; but who in vain endeavoured to obtain a coherent account, especially as the disorder was increased by the arrival of fresh fugitives.

"Oh !" sobbed a young maiden, one of Maid Marian's bridesmaids : "they have cut down our oak, our beautiful oak !"

"They were all armed with axes," said a sturdy lad, casting his eyes down with shame, however, "and we had only bows that can't shoot, and arrows without points."

"It was all that rascally miller's doing," said a third.

"A shame on all your cowardice !" broke in the rough voice of Nicholas Greenhorn, the landlord of the "Pig and Whistle," who hated the Puritans, and would gladly have adminis-

tered a sound thrashing to Zedekiah Pickering. "Upon my soul it is a disgrace to the village, but I'll lay any wager that Martin Bumpus did not budge from the spot."

"Oh, father!" cried a voice, choked with sobs: "they have struck him dead with an axe, and our young lady and our young squire are amongst them still. Help! help!" and Hannah Greenhorn, her festive attire all torn by the brambles in her rash course, threw herself sobbing on her father's breast.

Hitherto the knight had remained silent, listening to and observing all that was going on; but now he made a sign to those nearest him, upon which the knots of villagers separated.

"Thank God!" he said, in a voice which betrayed his emotion, "that my children *are* in the midst of them. I would rather, God help me! see them lying dead in their midst, than hear that they had fled before them."

He stopped for a moment, overcome by his feelings. The vicar pressed his hand.

"They are under God's protection," he said: "to His care we will commend them."

The knight thanked the vicar, but coldly,

for this kind of consolation ill-suited his present mood.

"It is not that," said he, bitterly. "Is this a moment to think of my children, when the whole misery and hopelessness of our position is suddenly revealed to me, and when I feel for the first time that I am as little master in my own estates as the King is in his own kingdom?"

"Let us put our trust in Him who is the King of kings."

But the knight gazed gloomily on the ground; for though a religious man after his fashion, his horizon was bounded, and his faith in the principles he had been taught unshakeable. He could no more think of his King without his God, than he could separate his God from his King.

"Well," cried he, at last, "they have left us no alternative, and since they have armed themselves with axes, we must defend ourselves with muskets and sabres. Up, and away to the castle! Let the arms be taken down from the walls, the red flag be hoisted, and shout with me, 'Long live the King!'"

The events of the morning had not passed without leaving their traces on this village

population, and at this moment they were ready to second their beloved squire in his most daring resolves. But a new aspect was given to the scene, by the arrival of a fresh party, heralded by Zedekiah Pickerling, brandishing an axe. In his rear were the Puritans, excited with their prayers and psalm-singing, and perhaps also with drink, driving before them the last remaining May-day fugitives. A picket of Cromwell's Dragoons appeared in the distance. Like one intoxicated, Zedekiah rushed into the midst of the circle, and approaching the knight with flashing eyes and axe uplifted, cried, "I know that thou art hard, and thy neck is like a vein of iron, and thy forehead brazen, but I will dash thee to pieces, saith the Lord God of Sabaoth." Not one hair's breadth did the knight flinch from the fearful stroke which threatened him, but Nicholas Greenhorn sprang between them, and seizing the handle of the axe, wrested it from the hand of the infuriated man, whilst the vicar, exerting all the strength he could command, drew Sir Tobias through the porch into the church, the door of which he bolted.

All was still and dark within, and the mid-day sun shone with a chastened light through

the painted windows, and upon the chequered black and white marble pavement, whilst the noise of the voices on the church green sounded far away.


The knight sank into a pew, and remained silent, as if broken-hearted. Grief and indignation filled his heart at the terrible thought that as they raised the axe against him, so one day they might raise it against his sovereign.

"Let me go," cried he at last, "keep me no longer in such unworthy imprisonment. Now that war is declared, the Knight of Childerley is at last at liberty to display his colours."

Sir Tobias would have opened the church door, but was restrained by the vicar.

"Not so," he said, gravely; "here you stand before your God and the dead."

His impressive manner had its effect, and the knight followed him to the altar, which was still covered with a black cloth, embroidered with silver, in conformity with the new Directory, proscribed in almost all the neighbouring churches. Silver candlesticks and a crucifix carved in ivory stood upon the altar, and everywhere throughout the little



church there were evidences of luxury and splendour. At the back of the altar was suspended a small gold lamp, which shed its faint tremulous light upon a marble monument beneath. A full-size figure of a female sleeping, with a sweet suffering expression of countenance, with closed eyes and folded hands, rested on the stone surface of the monument, upon which were inscribed lengthwise, in golden letters, the following words, in Latin, instead of English, as we have here rendered them :

In the vault under this monument rest the mortal remains
of

LADY KATHERINE CUTTS,

THE CONSORT OF SIR TOBIAS CUTTS,

Knight of Childerley, in the county of Cambridge,

AND ONLY DAUGHTER OF SIR THOMAS STUART,

Knight of Ely, in the aforesaid County.

She died on the 25th of September, in the year of Our Lord
1642,

In the 38th year of her age.

The peace which breathed over the spot, and the recollection of his dearly loved wife, whose death had so completely severed him from those who once had been dear to himself, as well as to her, combined to soothe the sorely wounded feelings of the knight.

"It was thus she looked upon her death-bed," he said, as he gazed upon the marble image, "so beautiful, so calm, so pale. Thus were her hands folded as she said, 'Promise me;' and I did promise her. It was a few days before her death when that man came, whose name I cannot utter at this grave, looking like a fallen angel in his splendid armour. The tempter! He dared to doubt my loyalty, and to call upon me to join the rising of the rebels. I was furious at the bare thought, and upon my passionate refusal, he then demanded my neutrality at least. My poor sick wife, who was in the room adjoining, had heard the conversation. 'Oliver,' she cried. She always liked the man. Heaven be praised, she has been spared the sight of his fallen state. Upon our going to her, she extended her white wasted hand, and said, 'Promise me that whatever the issue of events may be, no harm shall come to this house, nor to my husband and his children.'

" 'I promise you, dear cousin, most solemnly, if your husband will pledge himself, on his part, not to take up arms against the Parliament.'

" 'You will promise, will you not?' said

the dying woman in a voice I could not resist.

“‘I promise, on the one condition that I am never compelled to become a traitor to my King ;’ and from that day the royal standard has remained lowered from the flag-staff of Childerley.”

At this moment violent blows were heard against the church door.

“You hear them !” cried the knight : “they do not hesitate to proceed to extremities.”

“Remain here, I beg,” said the vicar ; “this is God’s house, and I am alone responsible for it.”

He fearlessly withdrew the bolts, and opening both doors, remained standing under the arched doorway. “Disturb not the peace that rests upon God’s house,” he cried to the mob which was eagerly pressing forward.

“The God of Papists and image-worshippers is not our God,” said Zedekiah, and turning to the crowd he pointed to the interior of the church. “Purify the sanctuary,” he cried, “and destroy the nest of those who have dishonoured it. Turn ye to the right and left, the house and church of Childerley are ours.”

In another moment the same work of de-

struction that had been carried on in the forest would have been begun here, but a warning voice was heard, one that the soldiers recognised full well.

They stood like a wall and saluted, for it was Frank Herbert who dashed up to the church green upon his foaming steed.

"Who is this man?" he cried, pointing to the miller, "who dares to take upon himself the part of leader, and to incite the soldiers of the Parliament to insubordination?"

"Colonel," began the miller, in an undertone, twirling his pointed hat as he spoke, "we thought you were sent to hear our complaints, and to remedy our just grievances—"

"Is it the custom of good men to obtain a hearing with their axes?"

"But it is written, 'with the axe'—"

"Away!" cried Frank, imperiously. "I have had enough," and he proceeded to read to his men the letter of protection, written and sealed by Cromwell, in which every soldier of the Parliament was forbidden, on pain of being hung, to enter the house and domains of the Knight of Childerley with any hostile intention. He afterwards held the document up that the soldiers might see clearly the

firm bold handwriting of the general. A letter of protection of this kind was by no means uncommon during the Civil War, and produced therefore no surprise amongst the troops.

Colonel Herbert had; hitherto had his back to the church, but the cavalcade accompanying the litter was now seen approaching; he therefore turned to make room for it, and in so doing his eye fell upon the vicar who still stood beneath the church porch.

“Good heavens!” he cried, “is it you, Hewitt, my friend, my brother!” and in another moment, the most cordial, heart-felt greetings were exchanged between himself and the vicar.

They had been schoolfellows at Merchant Taylors’, and had been as inseparable as Orestes and Pylades. One of those early friendships had been formed between them in which all the freshness of feeling is engaged, and which remains unaltered either by separation or difference of opinion. They had not seen each other since they parted at school; Hewitt leaving to prosecute his studies at Oxford and then at Cambridge, and Frank Herbert, a few years subsequently, repairing

to the latter university, which his friend had then quitted.

Since they had met the fearful tragedy of the Civil War had broken out, in which Frank Herbert took his part as a soldier of the Parliament, whilst John Hewitt ranged himself on the royal side, and was ready to lay down his life for the divine right of the King and bishops.

"Look at the alliance they are forming," said Zedekiah, turning to his Puritan companions. "What will become of us when Saul and Amalek thus conclude peace? After all, I begin to think there is truth in the report that this Cromwell is deceiving us."

"Hush, hush!" said his companions, but it was too late, he had been heard, and a pale haggard young man, with large eyes in which glowed the steadfast fire of fanaticism, laid his iron-gloved hand upon the miller's shoulder.

"Woe to thee and to thy soul for speaking against him in whom we have hoped. Hast thou not heard what has been written of him in the Prophet Daniel?"

He paused a moment, and the troops collected round him, saying, "The spirit is on him, he is going to preach." Even Frank

Herbert, who had stepped back to his post, did not interrupt the young preacher, for, like his general, he was indulgent towards these mystical sectaries.

Robert Lockyer, for such was his name, was a brave young soldier, and an enthusiastic Republican ; since his entrance into the army he had been infected with the doctrines of the Fifth Monarchy, which, based upon the prophecies of the Prophet Daniel, asserted that they were now in process of accomplishment. The Fifth Monarchy, in which Jesus Christ alone would be King, and which was to last for a thousand years, was to commence with the downfall of the Prince against whom they were waging war, and Cromwell was the chosen of the saints to prepare the world for the Second Advent of the Redeemer.

"Lockyer," said Colonel Herbert, after a time, noticing the exhausted looks of the young preacher, for whom he felt a sincere esteem, knowing that he had left aged parents, a blooming bride, and flourishing farm, for the sake of his country. "Why do you allow yourself to be carried away for the sake of this fellow ? he shall be dealt with in a different fashion. Who are you ?" he said, turn-

ing round upon the miller, and eyeing him severely from head to foot.

"I am the miller of Childerley," replied Zedekiah, "and, if your worship will only believe me, a God-fearing man."

"We are accustomed to that form of speech, and attach but little importance to it. You have not only sought to allure my soldiers from their oath of obedience, but by your own conduct, and that of your companions, to-day, you have incurred the punishment of hanging, by martial law."

The Puritans listened with gloomy countenances.

"It would not be the first time," they muttered, defiantly, "that we have been silenced in this manner, but now our time is come."

"Your time!" cried the Colonel, passionately, "to practise violence against the life and property of your neighbours, and to rise up against your superiors. Is that your time?"

"We have sworn to maintain the covenant, and to root out all kinds of sectarianism," replied a Puritan.

A dull murmur and clink of armour ran

throughout the soldiers' lines, but a look from their colonel was sufficient.

"My soldiers have learned to march and to halt, to fight and to lay down their arms, according to the orders of the Parliament," he said.

"The Parliament," repeated the Puritan, scornfully, "the Parliament, which has not even the courage to defend pious men like ourselves from the injustice of armed force. No, it is the general, and not the Parliament, that will soon be the ruler over England."

"It is useless to argue with you," replied the colonel, "every man has his weapon, and yours is the weapon of words. Meanwhile, I will give you time for reflection, and will place a detachment of my troops in your village, which will perhaps help to convince you of the folly and wickedness of your seditious words."

At this moment the colonel's eye fell upon the Knight of Childerley, who was emerging from the sanctuary, which had sheltered him from the fury of the mob. Both his children were clinging round him, and he was thanking God for having restored them to him.

"This is the gentleman, dear father," ex-

claimed Olivia, as Frank Herbert stood before them, "whom next to God we have to thank for our safe return;" and as she spoke her eyes and voice were alike expressive of tender gratitude.

In perfect silence the knight looked up. He recognised the hateful Parliamentary colours, and a conflict began between his strong natural feelings, and the duties required of him as a moral being. He could not disguise from himself that he owed all to this man, and yet what a crushing humiliating thought, to be indebted to an enemy of his King, to a rebel!

He had no time, however, to end the struggle one way or another, for the colonel, with a courteous bow, requested him to follow him to the spot where the miller was awaiting his verdict.

"I believe this man is one of your tenants," he said, pointing to Zedekiah, who looked the picture of abject fear.

"He is the miller of my village," replied Sir Tobias, "and holds the mill on lease. The farm has been a feudal tenure of his family for almost as many hundred years as the castle yonder has been in the possession of mine,

and, God help me, if I have ever acted towards him in any way to deserve this disloyal conduct at his hands."

"I presume that he swore the usual oath of allegiance to you," said the colonel.

"Yes, in the customary solemn manner."

"Then, in the name of the Parliament, I pronounce the following sentence: 'That Zedekiah Pickerling be from henceforth suspended from the possession of the mill, and that you, Sir Tobias, have full authority to name a substitute.'"

"Then, God help me!" cried the knight, "if it shall not be Martin Bumpus."

A loud hurrah greeted the decision, and all flocked around the worthy butler to congratulate him.

The ex-miller, who had been prepared for death, felt that he had come off very cheaply with the loss of the mill, especially as in his opinion it was not lost to him for ever.

"Only wait," he cried, shaking his fist at his deadly foe, Martin Bumpus, "and evil will befall both you and your master!"

"Come," said his companions, anxious to avert further strife, "come with us, and we will take care of you. We know now what

we have to expect from this *model* army, and these *model* generals."

"Ah," said the miller, taking care, however, to be out of gun-shot, "do you think I shall let the matter rest here? Oh, no, I shall gird up my loins, and seek my fortune in London, and there lay my cause before the council of the righteous. Do you see that maiden yonder being borne in a litter towards Childerley Castle? It will be an evil hour for all when she crosses the threshold of that house; yea, a fatal hour for herself and all her people."

CHAPTER VII.

THE FRIENDS.

FRANK HERBERT was a scion of a branch line of the great House of Herbert of Pembroke and Montgomery, so celebrated in the early days of the Plantagenets, and whose property, situated amidst the lovely scenery of the south-west coast of England, overlooks the blue rocky heights of the Welsh mountains.

By the intermarriage of the Herberts with the no less ancient and illustrious families of Worcester and Powis, their territory was extended as far as North Wales on the one side, and to the midland counties on the other. The Civil War had been as productive of discord in this widely ramified house as in almost all other families, and a Herbert stood on either side of the belligerent parties.

The ducal house of Pembroke, to which

Frank belonged, had been renowned for its poets, statesmen, and philosophers, who had richly illustrated the History of England. The men of the race were distinguished for their bravery and chivalrous conduct, and the women for their grace and gentle piety.

Frank had grown up amidst these noble traditions, and the example of so many illustrious ancestors had had no little share in the formation of his intellect and character. His father had died before the outbreak of the war, but his mother, who was closely allied to the House of Buckingham, was still alive, and resided at Merton Hall.

What a difference was there between the frivolous thoughtlessness of Buckingham, and the discreet gravity of Herbert. They had met casually at the university, and knew just enough of each other to feel mutual repulsion.

According to the expression of those times, Frank was a "Roundhead," although the designation, if taken literally, would be but ill applied to him. He had a profusion of the most beautiful chestnut brown hair, upon which he was wont to bestow the greatest care, but which drew upon him the mistrustful eye of the zealots of the party.

There had been a time when this disfiguring cropping of the hair had been a political badge, a religious observance, but that time was past, and a party which is supreme, can afford to discard any such distinguishing marks, and ought to do so, unless they would wish to render themselves ridiculous.

Frank Herbert neither cut off his "royal locks," nor spoke in the nasal twang of the "saints." He, as well as other far-seeing, energetic, and unprejudiced minds, forecast far greater and more serious aims than those to which narrow-minded and despotic interests clung; and the great man, who, for the first time, gave full freedom to the mind and conscience of man, could not expect him to bow beneath the pressure of mere forms and externals.

Frank Herbert, though descended from a family of poets, was no poet himself, but he loved both poets and historians, and often on the night before some battle, he would read by the light of the camp-fire the "Annals" and "Histories" of Tacitus. From this historian he imbibed fresh courage for the future, fresh vigour for the present, and as he read he was strengthened and rooted in his one

idea, that from a Republican form of government alone was the true welfare of the state and happiness of the people to be expected.

These were not, however, the thoughts which were now raging within him as he descended the castle hill to pay a visit to his old school friend, the vicar. No. He had escorted the squire and Olivia as far as the gate of the castle, and there he had parted from them. For one minute only had Olivia's hand rested in his, and then she had disappeared beneath the dusky archway on the other side of the bridge.

Who can say, however, but that such moments often decide the whole future of one's life!

When Frank entered the vicar's study, which was a reflex of his own peaceful harmonious nature, he found him amidst his books, quite undisturbed by the pawing of the horses beneath his window, and the voices of the dragoons who were busily preparing for the march. The sun was shining brightly into the room, and lighting up the brown and scarlet bindings, the leather and velvet covers of the books, with which the walls were lined.

Frank stood still a moment in the doorway. "Oh!" he cried, "that I could change with you, and remain here."

"Ah, Frank," replied his friend, drawing him to a cushioned bench, "it was the ardent wish of our school-days to pass our lives together."

"A life such as the poet describes," said Frank, gazing upon the landscape towards the castle hill, "a life within the boundaries of one's home, sowing the beloved corn-fields. See, how the sun is smiling, how fresh and green the meadows are; in such scenes all mankind should be happy. Alas! to what misery have these unfortunate people been brought by these dissensions."

"Then even amidst the glitter of arms, and on the road to fame and triumph, you are desirous of peace?" said the vicar.

"I should be a wicked man if I cherished any other wish," replied Frank, "and as for fame or triumph, they have no existence in a civil war. It is the voice of bitter necessity alone that we obey."

"In those words I recognise you, Frank," said the vicar, warmly pressing his friend's hand.

The latter rose, and paced up and down the room with uneasy strides.

"Since this morning," he cried, "since I entered this village, since I have seen *you* and—and," he stood still before the window, and gazed at the castle hill, "the aching grief of my heart has been roused more keenly than ever. Oh! why are we obliged to meet thus?" A look of sharp pain convulsed his features.

The vicar could only in part understand his friend. "If your desire for peace is so very warm," said he, "what prevents you from restoring it to our heavily tried country? It lies with you; and better, as Cicero says, the most unjust peace, than the most righteous war."

"And *does* your party desire peace?" asked Frank; "and is it possible to negotiate, when your King has repeatedly declared that there is no necessity to keep one's word with rebels?"

"If two interpretations can be given to a speech, let us choose the most honourable," said the vicar, mildly. "He who concludes an armistice, accords the name of a belligerent party to his opponent, however it might have been denied hitherto, and with the abolition of the

word 'rebel,' the other hateful construction falls to the ground."

Frank shook his head sceptically.

"I do not wish to pain you," he said, "for this man whom you call King is dear to *you*, but what is he to us? Has he not broken his faith to us a thousand times since the day when, sixteen years ago, he publicly granted the Bill of Rights? and do we not owe it to the shades of Pym and of Hampden to prosecute the holy cause of freedom for which they offered up their lives?"

"And do you not think that *we* also love freedom?"

"You think so," said Frank, "and yet you always speak of the divine right of the ruler. But the first requirement of the people is *freedom*, I tell you."

"Freedom is one requirement of mankind, but order is another. Is the divine will to be manifested alone in the unfathomable mysteries of the universe? and harmony and beauty to be confined to heavenly structures?"

"That makes it all the worse if you mean to imply that it is decreed by Providence that a certain family should reign in the kingdom, and a certain class in the church, and that to

them should be granted a divine right, inviolable, and imperishable for all eternity !”

“I fear the love of our country is our one and only bond, but that is indissoluble,” said the vicar. “Frank, you are going on your way, and your path is marked out for you, but think of what I am now going to say and ponder over it. You may perhaps assist in its accomplishment. I have but one hope left, and that is in a meeting between Cromwell, the man chosen by God to lead his countrymen into new and glorious paths, and the King.”

Frank looked at his friend in astonishment. “Between the King and Cromwell !” he cried. “Impossible ! Absolutism and freedom ! Cromwell and Charles Stuart ! The Sovereignty of the People, and the King ‘by the Grace of God !’ ”

A flourish of trumpets here broke in upon the sacred peace of the study.

“They are ready to start, and are calling for their leader,” said Frank ; “I must tear myself away from the golden dream of peace and happiness. A soldier must obey the commands of duty only, and not the dictates of his heart.”

He opened the window, and the evening

fragrance of spring was wafted in. Before him, on the top of the hill, lighted up with the glow of the setting sun, stood the Castle of Childerley. He yet lingered. This young knight, who bore the impress of strength and decision in every movement, seemed to be struggling irresolutely with himself. At last, vanquished by the weakness he could not defy, he drew his friend towards him, and with the manner of one anxious to confide a secret, said, "I have a message for the lady of that castle. Tell her from me that I shall never forget this day, let the future be what it may. *That* we cannot command, but our hearts we may."

"We may command that too," said the vicar, gently, "but it dies from the violence practised upon it."

For an instant only did his thoughts recur to his one deep sorrow, and then, as if checking himself from any selfish emotion, he added inquiringly, "Olivia?"

"That is the name which will always be dear to me," replied Frank.

"And why do you not remain?" urged his friend, before whose active mind all sorts of possibilities presented themselves, "at least

for this one evening, and be your own messenger?"

"Because I am a soldier, and must this very evening meet, on the road between here and St. Ives, a detachment of Cromwell's regiment, commanded by Claypole. Do you know him? He is an excellent young fellow from Northamptonshire. They say that Cromwell designs him for his second daughter, Elizabeth."

These words, so lightly spoken, pierced like a dagger through the heart of the vicar. His lips trembled, and he grew pale, but he controlled himself so well that Frank did not observe the slightest alteration in him.

"Will you show me one last act of kindness?" he continued, "for who knows whether we may meet again? Brave fellows have fallen before me, and I claim no better fate. Still I should like to leave a little souvenir for that lady. Will you give her this volume in my name? it has been very dear to me, and it may perhaps be a pleasant little remembrance for her."

The vicar took the little book, which was bound in velvet, with richly gilt edges, and promised faithfully to deliver it.

Then the two parted, as friends part one of whom is about to march to the field of battle, whilst the other who remains behind does not dare to wish him victory.

It was already growing dark in the valley, and in the twilight that evening, the vicar sat alone at the open window. In his hand was the book which Frank had given him for Olivia, and on its title-page these words were inscribed—

THE POEMS OF JOHN MILTON.

LONDON, A.D. 1645.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE CAMP OF THE ROYALISTS.

SEVERAL weeks have elapsed since the events recorded in the last chapter. It is now the month of June, and the lovely valleys about Bardon Hill, in Leicestershire, are blooming with roses, whilst bright green meadows cover the banks of the Avon, of that same Avon which, running from hence into Warwickshire, flows past the Stratford of Shakspeare. But who in the June of the year 1645 had any sentiment for roses and poets? Certainly not the lonely rider whom we see on the high road leading to Market Harborough. Sir Harry Slingsby, for it was he, no longer wore the disguise of a peasant, in which we last saw him, for the soil on which his horse now trod was royal ground. Leicester was in the hands of the King, who

was himself residing there, whilst his army was encamped in the neighbourhood.

The Duke of Buckingham is not now in Sir Harry's company, for on the very day, and almost within the same hour that the latter had declared that Buckingham's disgraceful love affair had well nigh placed in jeopardy the royal missive, had the duke, like the insolent boy that he was, turned his horse's head in another direction, calling out as a farewell greeting to his elder companion, that he could make his way well enough without him, and that under any circumstances he would reach the royal camp in time to prepare a reception for him.

"Follow your own course," thought Sir Harry to himself, "and if you are taken, it will be of little consequence. The fewer of such lads the better," and the brave knight pursued his way with all the caution and vigilance demanded by the importance of his mission, thinking far more of the safety of his despatches than of that of his own person.

At the end of six or seven days, during which time he had stopped by day at the castles of well-disposed Cavaliers, and travelled at night, he reached Oxford, only to find that

his Majesty, with all his troops, had left that city in a north-westerly direction, whilst the Parliamentary army under Fairfax was approaching it from the south-east.

The difficulties of his march were now increased, as he incurred the risk of being either shut up in Oxford, or of running into the arms of the enemy. For days together he was obliged to lie at anchor, like a ship awaiting a fair wind, and from his various hiding-places behind the panels called "Priests' dens," from their having been originally used to conceal Roman Catholic priests, he was enabled to observe the movements of the rebels in rather closer proximity sometimes than was altogether pleasant to him, brave and loyal as he was. He, in various ways, learned to know and appreciate this model army, under the command of the Lord of the Marshes, as Cromwell was satirically termed by the Cavaliers, and the stories he could have related of them were of a very different kind to those circulated by the Royalists. Moreover, he was resolved not to suppress the truth on the first occasion of his appearance before his sovereign.

He was not far from the goal now. It was

late in the evening of the 13th of June, and Market Harborough, the head-quarters of Prince Rupert, was close at hand. He was about to enter a small forest, through the tops of whose trees shone the purple glow of the setting sun, when he was arrested by sounds which made his horse prick up his ears. The knight was far too wary not to stop and listen, for what did this laughing, and singing, and tramping of horses mean? But as the singing grew nearer, and he could distinguish the words of a satirical song on the Parliament, his last doubts vanished. Well did Sir Harry know the refrain, as an allusion to the triumphs of Montrose, the Black Marquis, in the Scotch mountains, and who but Royalists would sing this?

Amidst these sounds a troop of horsemen sprang out of the forest, with Prince Maurice at their head, the younger brother of Prince Rupert, and like him also, the loyal adherent of his uncle, the King.

“Why there is Sir Harry Slingsby!” cried the prince.

They had made a jovial afternoon of it, and had been riding about, and jesting with the farmers’ pretty daughters, and with the pea-

sant girls in the different villages, and had been singing, drinking, and amusing themselves, like the gay Cavaliers they were.

"Holloa! Sir Harry Slingsby!" they cried, as the knight respectfully saluted the prince, "whither are you going in such haste?"

"To his Majesty," he replied, "with despatches from Paris."

"The despatches will be welcome," said the prince, quite jovially, twirling the points of his moustache; "but you, my poor fellow, have come too late, I fear."

"How is that?" asked the knight, surprised.

"As if you did not know yourself," replied the prince, "that you have had some little transaction with his grace of Buckingham. The duke has been here now eight days; eight, did I say? fourteen, I mean. '*Les absens ont toujours tort*,' my brave fellow!"

"I will not believe," began Sir Harry, passionately, "that the prating of a boy—of a—"

"Hush, hush, Sir Harry, you must never forget that the father of his Grace was the never-to-be-forgotten friend of the King—"

"And for that very reason ought his son—"

“Allow me to finish what I was about to say, Sir Harry—and that his son stands high in the favour of his Majesty. Yet what does it signify to me?” added the good-natured prince, “you and I have always been good comrades. Do you remember how on our foaming steeds we drove the rabble back into the town of Reading? Ah, if we had been allowed to ride on, and had been followed, the King would have been in Whitehall to-day, instead of in the miserable village near Leicester. Here, my friend, is a draught for you,” and in a fraternal manner he offered him a drinking-horn, whilst he hummed a few verses from a song he had learned when a student at Oxford.

But Sir Harry rode by his side, his head lowered, and his heart full of sadness, and it was in vain that the prince tried to cheer him with this and other songs.

They had now entered the streets of Market Harborough; it was getting dark, and here and there lights were kindled.

The whole place swarmed with troops, and everywhere might be seen dragoons and cuirassiers trailing their long sabres on the pavement; whilst girls’ voices were incessantly

heard crying for help, upon which Prince Maurice laughed, saying, they were not serious, and took the opportunity to hum Sir Richard Fanshawe's popular song, 'The Very Reverse !'

When they arrived at the largest hostelry in the town, where Prince Rupert, the Commander-in-chief, had taken up his head-quarters, they were informed that his highness and his suite were out on a shooting excursion. This was not the season for shooting, but Cavaliers must be amused, and what else could be done to dispel the ennui of camp-life ?

"Come," cried Prince Maurice to his companions, "let us go and meet them ; they must be on their way home."

Sir Harry Slingsby alone betook himself to the large assembly-room on the ground-floor. There he sat, after his long dangerous journey, exhausted and sick at heart, with his head leaning on his hand, and an untouched tankard of wine before him. His heart forboded him no good. What had he to expect after the intimation of the thoughtless young prince ? The more he thought over it, the more clear was it to him, that Prince Rupert,

jealous of the power which he now appeared to hold completely in his own hands, viewed every step of the Queen with mistrust, and sought to remove all who were acting in her name.

A loud flourish of trumpets was now heard. The sportsmen had returned, and with them many lovely women, whose presence graced the camp of the Royalists. In their long riding-habits, with whips in their delicate hands, they entered the assembly-room ; now suddenly filled with the flower of the Royalist nobility of England. What a splendour of youth and beauty thronged the door of this country inn ! what an exuberance of superb strength and gallantry, of haughty arrogance, ready to jest at danger ; of thoughtlessness and loyalty ! How proudly they bore those heads, some of which were destined not long afterwards to be shattered by the ball or axe. A reckless daring and defiance was written on their faces. They despised the enemy, who might defeat, but *never* could humiliate them.

The last of the party had now entered the saloon, and amongst them were George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, and his younger brother, Lord Francis Villiers, a youth of six-

teen, handsomer, and more distinguished for intellectual endowments than George. Leaning on the arm of the duke was Elizabeth, Countess of Dysart, one of the most graceful and wittiest, if not the most beautiful, of all the women of the Court who had followed Charles I. in his misfortunes. Such a charming smile played around the beautifully shaped mouth, and such roguery lurked in the dimples of her chin ! The most delicate fingers played with the golden knob of her riding-whip, and the daintiest feet could be seen, as she slightly raised her long habit.

"Well, my lord," said she, turning to Lord Francis, who was on her left, "what news have you of the beautiful Mrs. Kirke ? and how do you endure this long absence from your charmer ?"

The countess was jesting. Every one in the camp made merry at the enthusiastic devotion of the Cavalier of sixteen for a lady in the prime of her beauty, who, under the name of Circe, enjoyed some celebrity in the annals of those times, and who was supposed to favour the more substantial regard of Prince Rupert.

The young lord, however, with all the

ardour of first love, viewed the matter quite seriously, and had managed before leaving Oxford to steal a blue ribbon from her curls, which he ever after wore next his heart. He now placed his hand upon it, and bowing gallantly to the countess, answered,

“ I had not loved thee, dear, so much
Had I not loved honour more.”

The countess smiled, and leaned slightly on the arm of the duke, who led her quickly through the waving masses of ladies and Cavaliers.

George Villiers, too, if he did not wear the blue ribbon of his mistress next his heart, still carried her image there ; for though in later life he was never famous for constancy in love or politics, he was now scarcely nineteen, and after an absence of four weeks was still enthusiastic about her he had chosen. The countess, whom he had made his confidante, well remembered the pretty dark-eyed child, at her parents' house at Amsterdam, the night of the performance before the Queen, and was quite amused at the idea of the young beauty wishing now to take refuge with her.

“ Why not ?” she said, “ we may, perhaps, learn from her those powers of attraction,

which, alas ! we do not possess ourselves ;" and as she said this her eyes wandered round the room with a consciousness of her own irresistible charms, and she tossed back her luxuriant curls on her finely formed shoulders.

"Madam," cried George Villiers, "you may measure the depth of my love when I am able to think of her with you on my arm !"

The young duke was in his best humour. His grey eyes seemed to be continually on the search for adventure, and his lips were ever ready to utter some pretty speech to the ladies, or some wicked joke to the gentlemen. His whole presence was radiant with the insolent beauty of youth. His long chestnut curls hung down over his point lace collar, which half covered his shoulders, and on his coat of brown velvet sparkled the Star of St. George, which had been presented to him by Henrietta Maria, whilst under his left arm he carried the Spanish hat with the plume.

The countess was leaning on his right arm, when the duke suddenly stood still almost in the middle of the room, and involuntarily, either for defence or attack, grasped the gilded handle of his dagger.

"What is it, my lord ?" asked the countess.

“Nothing,” laughed the duke, “or as good as nothing. I see my friend, the worthy Sir Harry Slingsby.”

Sir Harry had also seen the duke, and rose from the table at which, hitherto, he had been seated alone. He was the elder most certainly, but the duke held the higher position. The scene in the forest, the behaviour of the duke, had deeply wounded him, but this was not the moment, in his opinion, to indulge private feeling, when the welfare of the country was at stake in a bloody war. He, therefore, advanced towards the duke to offer the hand of reconciliation, but his grace, without even returning his bow, turned his back upon the highly-affronted knight.

The latter stood for a moment confounded. “Is it come to this,” he muttered, in a voice trembling with shame and indignation, “that a man grown old in the service of the King is to allow himself to be thus insulted by a boy!”

Hereupon, he betook himself to another part of the room, but the few faces he recognised amongst the flock of courtiers evidently avoided any encounter with him, whilst the duke, with the countess on his arm, had collected round him a group of laughing Cava-

liers and giggling ladies, to whom he was relating his adventure with the raw country squire. He told them how he had challenged Sir Harry for his insolence, but that the King on hearing of it had forbidden any such quarrels in his camp, but on receiving Buckingham's trustworthy report, had been pleased to order Sir Harry Slingsby's dismissal from the court.

Meanwhile, the folding-doors of an adjoining room had been thrown open. Prince Rupert, the Commander-in-chief, had received the various heads of the regiments, and was now ready for the reception of the rest. Sir Harry sent in his name. Immediately the Prince appeared between the doors which separated his room from the large hall. The rustling of the ladies' trains, the tumult of so many steps and voices which had hitherto filled the spacious room, was suddenly hushed on his appearance. All eyes were turned towards him and a profound silence ensued.

Prince Rupert wore the red uniform of his regiment. He was a young man of about six-and-twenty at that time, and the expressive boy's face, painted by Van Dyck, had become

harder in the tempest of war, whilst the delicate hand, immortalized by that painter, had since been deeply imbrued in blood. But the large bright eyes had still that sparkle of bonhomie, which made him so beloved by his troops, whilst the large curved nose, the firmly closed though voluptuous mouth, betrayed at once the character of the adventurer and soldier of fortune; the bravery which rushes into the battle, and the impetuosity which loses it.

"Sir Harry Slingsby," said he, returning his bow in a very measured manner, "I speak in the name of the King, when I demand first your despatches, and then your sword."

Convulsively the brave knight clenched his hands at being thus addressed in the face of the court.

"Why," cried he, with trembling lips, "why am I insulted like this?—I—I, who have always worn my sword honourably, and brought these despatches hither at the risk of my life?"

"Sir," continued the prince, "it is not for you to question, but to obey."

For an instant the brain of the poor knight almost reeled, and his voice seemed to fail

him. He composed himself at last, and unloosing his sword from the shoulder-belt, he took it in both hands, and said in a voice of deep emotion :

"This sword has faithfully served the kings of England ; it is the sword of my ancestors, and I could have wished to bequeath it to my descendants. But his Majesty wills it otherwise. He can destroy the sword, but not the loyalty with which the Slingsbys have wielded it. Here it is."

He presented it to the prince, who took it, and said, "And, sir, your despatches."

But with great composure, Sir Harry replied, "Your highness must excuse me : the sword belongs to the King, but the despatches belong to the Queen."

"You presume too much," fumed the prince, impatient and angry at seeing his path again crossed by the Queen.

"They are directed to the King, and to the King alone will I surrender them," was the intrepid answer of the knight.

There is no saying whether the hot-blooded prince might not, perhaps, have resorted to violence against the worthy knight, had not a confused tumult at this moment been heard

in the streets. The hoofs of many horses clattered over the pavement, and the sentinels presented arms. Loudly resounded through the deserted market-place the cry, "Make way for the King!"

Just then the midnight hour struck from the tower of the nearest church.

All in the saloon waited in breathless silence. The horses stopped, the riders dismounted, the doors were thrown open, and the young noblemen, who formed the body-guard of the King, made their appearance; the golden company, as it was called, at the head of which stood Lord Digby, the declared enemy of Prince Rupert, and the intimate friend of Lord Jermyn, Master-of-the-horse to the Queen.

Through the lines of sparkling uniforms and glittering armour his Majesty passed into the saloon, and was received with a loud and hearty "God save the King! God save the King!"

The King was attired in dark violet velvet, and wore the insignia of the Order of the Garter. His appearance, though delicate, was extremely dignified, and he responded with gracious condescension to the welcome of his

loyal subjects. He looked pale and worn, and his intellectual brow showed traces of the severe struggle he had passed through in the many wrinkles with which it was furrowed. There was an expression of weariness in his eye, and age pressed prematurely upon this man, who, born with the century, did not at this time number more than five-and-forty years.

A touch of melancholy characterized the firmly-closed mouth, and the whole expression of his long, haggard, almost spiritual face, was one of sadness and sorrowful foreboding.

Never did his appearance recall so vividly his name of "The White King," given in reference to the white garb he wore upon his coronation-day, and from a prophecy which referred to his end, than it did on this occasion. With the lofty dignity which never deserted Charles I., even in trivial matters, he saluted the ladies of his court, the Cavaliers, the commanding officers of his troops, who, ranged on either side, bowed respectfully as he passed.

Amongst the latter he recognised Sir Harry Slingsby, and his dark eye rested for a moment, with a sad expression, upon the knight,

who in his turn was affected even to tears.

“Sire,” cried he, throwing himself on his knees before the King, and endeavouring to kiss his hand, “I come from France.”

A transient smile passed over the grave countenance of the King. From France! From Henrietta Maria! From his beloved wife! The King stood still. His lips moved; he evidently wished to speak, but a few inarticulate sounds were alone audible. It is well known that in moments of excitement, or strong emotion, it was difficult to Charles I. to express himself with fluency, and this, when it occurred as now, in the presence of the court, caused him the most painful embarrassment. His pale cheek grew crimson—the change in him did not escape Prince Rupert, and he availed himself of the favourable moment.

Advancing towards the King, he led him away from the hated Slingsby, without the latter having been permitted to kiss the hand of his sovereign.

Sir Harry rose from his knees, and staggered back to a chair in a distant corner of the room.

"Oh!" he sobbed, as he buried his face in his hands. "Is this the reception prepared for me?—this the meeting with my King?"

The King meanwhile had entered the apartment of Prince Rupert, and falling into a chair, made a sign to the lords, generals, and captains of his troops, who had all assembled at his command, to be seated. The folding-doors between the rooms being closed, as a council of war was about to be held by the King, he informed them that the sudden announcement that the enemy had been descried bivouacking on the heights of Naseby, was the cause of his coming so late at night. Fire darted from the eyes of Prince Rupert, and a hot discussion arose as to the advisability of attacking the enemy at once, or of waiting to ascertain its position and strength.

Lord Digby was of course against the attack, while Prince Rupert was in favour of it.

"I was told," said he, in his refined, courtier-like voice, "that Sir Harry Slingsby waits in the ante-room. He brings despatches from the Queen. Should they not be opened before we arrive at any decision?"

Prince Rupert chafed. "What have the despatches to do with our determination?" he cried.

Directly Lord Digby perceived that it would be obnoxious to the prince if Sir Harry and the despatches were again brought forward, he grew more persistent.

"Shall I give orders for him to be shown in?"

"I protest against it," cried the prince, passionately. "I have only this very instant by his Majesty's orders demanded his sword from him, and a man who has lost his sword cannot appear before the King."

"But the despatches?" continued Lord Digby, more resolutely than ever.

"I know very well that people are trying to sow discord in the councils of his Majesty," muttered the prince between his teeth, and then added aloud, "The knight declines to hand over the despatches to me."

"Let them be demanded in my name," said the King, and Lord Digby withdrew, and soon returned with the desired despatches.

They were letters from the Queen, and the King's eyes were filled with a brief sunshine as he recognised the beloved handwriting,

and his hand trembled as he broke open the seal. Silence prevailed for some little time.

"I find," said the King, at last, "that the contents of this letter are of the first importance to the question now occupying our attention, and as the despatch announces that our troops, horses, and ammunition, will be more than doubled at the end of the summer, I think we had better defer the decision till then, and move northwards to complete the junction with Montrose."

"Are we to fly before the enemy?" cried Prince Rupert, indignantly: "that can never be your Majesty's meaning."

The King still sat irresolute, and the debate continued, when a flourish of trumpets from without announced the arrival of fresh news. The prince immediately sent off one of his adjutants, who returned forthwith accompanied by an officer covered with dust and blood.

"What news?" cried the King, rising.

"Sire," replied the wounded officer, "I come from the outposts which are stationed as far as Naseby. We have been attacked and been obliged to retreat—Cromwell has just arrived at the camp of Fairfax."

The King stamped on the floor with indignation, "Cromwell!" cried he; "always this Cromwell. Who will deliver me from him, living or dead?"

"I," cried the prince, "dead or alive. Your Majesty, we can no longer avoid the battle which is offered us. A retreat now would be worse than a defeat!"

The King paced restlessly up and down the room.

"Well," cried he, at last, standing still before a map laid out on the table, "we will risk it. Prince, give the order for the advance march for three o'clock this morning. We have two hours still for rest. Gentlemen, prepare for this, our decision. Good-night, gentlemen," and he replaced his high Spanish hat, and drew on his glove. "*Au revoir!* and let our watchword be, 'God and the Queen Maria!'"

And "God and the Queen Maria!" resounded through the little room, the folding-doors of which were now flung open, through the saloon, through the house, and soon throughout the whole town.

As the King once more passed through the

saloon to retire for an hour's repose, Slingsby again approached.

"Your majesty," cried he, "have mercy on me ! Suffer me to seek death to-morrow upon the battle-field !"

The King, upon whose right hand was the prince, looked with a sorrowful gaze at the suppliant, then shook his head gently, and passed on.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CAMP OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ARMY.

THE shades of evening were falling fast on the 13th of June, and the camp-fires of the army of the Parliament were burning as far as the heights of Naseby, when the foremost columns of Cromwell's Ironsides and the last outposts of Fairfax' rear-guard joyfully greeted one another at the foot of the hill, the south-eastern slopes of which were completely covered with tents, horses, cannon, and the artillery waggons of the army of the Roundheads. Though thousands were congregated within a space that the eye might have embraced, had not twilight cast its veil over the scene, there was little of the loud tumultuous confusion generally found with a bivouacking army. Each man did his duty, but he did it in silence. He performed his service in the field

with the same devotion that he would have paid to the service of God in a church or meeting-house. The presence of the Highest was everywhere with him. No oath passed his lips, and if he sang, it was not the ribald song of the soldier in praise of false glory and licentious love, but he struck up one of those songs with which Israel, the people of the Lord, celebrated the eve of its battles.

On the plateau of the hill, whose slopes were more and more veiled by the gathering darkness and mist, stood, surrounded by his staff, the Generalissimo of the Parliamentary army, Fairfax. Before them, at a short distance, lay the village of Naseby, and in the narrow cottage windows the comfortable lights were already twinkling, whilst through the open doors the flames could be seen burning merrily on the hearths. Amidst trees and orchards, this village was a picture of peaceful retirement. Who, beyond its inhabitants, knew even of the existence of such a village, destined, however, to be immortalized in English history?

The village clock struck, and the sound echoed through the still evening air.

"Nine o'clock," counted the general. "I

would that Cromwell were here ! Let me be informed if any announcement arrives from our outposts," said he to one of his staff officers, whilst he repaired to his own tent, which was pitched close by.

The guard presented arms as he entered. The tent was low and barren even of comforts. On the turfy ground stood a wooden chair and a table, and on the latter burned a taper which was but badly protected by the thin canvas of the tent, from the night wind which was rising. By this flickering light could be seen on the table, maps, a plan of the position, an inkstand, all kinds of instruments for measurement, and a telescope. At the further end of the tent stood a camp-bed, and at its head sat an old servant.

"Is she asleep?" asked the general, approaching the couch cautiously.


"Yes, for the last hour, your Excellency," was the answer.

The general bent over the bed in which a little girl of some six or seven years was slumbering. It was his own child, quite a soldier's child, Mary Fairfax. Two years previously, when he had gone to the campaign, both mother and daughter had accompanied

him, but after the affair of Bradford the mother had returned home to the castle. The little daughter, however, would not be separated from her father, and wept so bitterly, and entreated so earnestly to be allowed to go with him, that at last he was compelled to lift her on the saddle before him, and to take both her and an old nurse, who had faithfully watched over him as a boy, with him to the campaign.

During all the engagements and marches of the Civil War, had this little creature been with him, either on horseback, or in his tent, or by his side. Many and many a time she had been in great danger, often after the fatigues of a long ride she had fainted, and once in the retreat from Bradford to Hull, she broke down completely exhausted, and the death struggle seemed ready to seize upon that life which had but just begun to blossom.

In closed lines, with drums beating, and colours flying, the regiments crossed the Trent, whilst the unhappy father, who had been himself painfully wounded in the hand by a shot, hung over the beloved child. The last column approached, and the general was forced to leave her, dying as he be-



lieved, and without the hope of ever seeing her again, in a miserable peasant's hut by the wayside. But the vigour of youth in her revived, and a few days later she appeared once more on horseback, sitting before the old nurse, a most welcome apparition in the gloomy camp of the Puritans, where she was loved and caressed by those iron natures.

She was breathing softly as her father tenderly stooped over her. From the hardships she had so early learned to brave, her face had acquired a somewhat severe and decided expression, and her life in the open air had given a brown tint to the complexion. But as she now lay asleep with folded hands, the grace and peace of childhood played around her features, and the father's heart was filled with love and happiness as he gazed upon her.

She stirred in her sleep, and raised her little hands as if trying to grasp some shadow. Her lips moved, and the general heard her distinctly murmur in her dream the name of "Buckingham." Then she was still once more, and smiled in her sleep.

"What is the meaning of that?" asked the father anxiously.

"Your Excellency must forgive me," replied the old nurse, who had not learned to conceal the truth when questioned by her master. "Lady Mary begged me to tell her some story before she fell asleep, something that had really happened, she said, and so I told her the history of the great Duke of Buckingham, and of his being murdered one morning by a man at Portsmouth, and that is what my lady was dreaming about, perhaps."

Fairfax forbid the old servant to relate any such stories in future. It ill became *his* daughter, and in the Parliamentary camp, too, to be entertained by such narrations.

At this moment the report of a pistol was heard quite close to the tent, a second shot followed, and the sentinel cried out, "Bring them to a stand."

The child started from her sleep, for she had a keen scent for powder, and sat upright in her little white night-dress, pushing her long hair back from her forehead with both hands.

"Where is he?" she cried, "the young Buckingham, whose father was . . ."

Here she saw her father, and stretched out her arms to him, as a third shot fell.

"Ah! I remember!" she cried. "I have

been dreaming. The enemy is advancing ; there is going to be a battle."

With one spring she was out of bed, and standing with her bare feet and flowing hair before her father, who passionately embraced her.

" Must I mount my horse, dear father ?" she cried, almost sorrowfully; for although during the march she was constantly near her father, in the beginning of an attack she was always left in the last line.

" No, no, my child," replied the general, " it can't have come to that yet. Lie down again in your little bed, Mary, my darling ! I will come back to you when I have seen what is going on outside. A spy, perhaps, for whom we have a hempen cord in readiness," he muttered between his teeth, whilst he raised the curtains of the tent and stepped out into the open air.

By the bright light of the large fire burning opposite the tent, he saw in the midst of a crowd of soldiers who had hurriedly flocked together from all sides, three miserable ragged figures. Every kind of insult and threat, as well as many a thrust from the bayonet, they had to endure. Directly the general made his

appearance, one of the soldiers stepped forward to report.

“General,” said he, “the three prisoners.”

Fairfax stepped up to the group standing by the fire, and seldom had his eyes lighted upon such complete figures of misery, as these three presented. Hunger and want were too legibly depicted in their faces, for any difference of opinion to be possible, and every bone in their body might have been counted.

Who else could these three candidates for death be, but Jürgen, the strolling actor, the man of No-Party, with two of his comrades from the forest of Longstow.

The poor rascal had felt great remorse ; he had had plenty of time for it, and no superfluity of nourishment had hindered the work of repentance. He had been dragged in the rear of Fairfax’s army, from village to village, and from county to county, and was now tremblingly awaiting his sentence from Cromwell. For as he had been made prisoner by a detachment of Cromwell’s dragoons, the verdict of the military tribunal had to be ratified by the commander of the same. Jürgen trembled at the name of Cromwell, and drew a free breath whenever he learned that the General

had taken a different route. For the last week the Puritan ministers had been unceasingly preparing him for death, and urging him to take the Covenant, as the only means of his reaching Heaven, upon which he answered, that he was in no hurry, and that there would be plenty of time for that before he started. The hardened sinner !

In his heart, however, Jürgen was not half so composed as his words would lead one to suppose, for he was well aware of what he had to expect ; as he had been taken when bearing arms against the Parliament, and letters had been found upon him that had not been received so kindly as by Sir Tobias Cutts.

Although he stood face to face, as it were, with death, he clung more than ever to that world, which, in its best mood, had never behaved better than a step-parent to him.

“ Who knows,” said he to himself, “ perhaps I may escape this time !” and “ perhaps” was the golden word which lulled him to sleep.

From this false security he was startled by the announcement, which ran like lightning through the camp, that Cromwell’s troops were fast approaching, and in the twilight of the

same day Jürgen perceived through a hole in the wall of his prison that fires were kindled all over the hills.

“Comrades,” cried he, “what do you think of our trying whether this hole is large enough for us to get through? Better men than ourselves have got through worse holes, and the best of us can only die once. If we fail, we shall be no worse off than we were; but if we succeed, in half an hour we shall be at the other side of the village, and early in the morning be once more with the Royalists.” The unlucky issue of this attempt is proved by their all three being in safe custody once more, as Fairfax was brought from his tent by the third report of a pistol.

Joyful acclamations were now heard, and a thousand voices cried, “Long live the General Lieutenant! Long live Cromwell!”

The junction between the troops of Fairfax and Cromwell had taken place at the foot of the hill, and an ordnance officer, on a foaming steed, accompanied by a few troops and a trumpeter, was sent forward to announce to Fairfax the arrival of Cromwell.

Jürgen, to his dismay, perceived that it was Frank Herbert who swung himself from his

saddle, and whose gorgeous uniform glittered in the blaze of the camp-fire.

"It is all up with us now, my friends," said he. "That is the very colonel with whom we had to do in the forest of Longstow."

None of the softer emotions, with which he had parted from his friend the vicar, were now to be discovered on Frank's countenance, now it spoke only of war and duty.

"You bring good news, colonel," said Fairfax, as he received him in a friendly manner. "The men, accustomed to victory, are come, the dragoons of the Parliament."

"Cromwell's dragoons, at your service," replied Frank Herbert. "The general has sent one of his staff officers with a few men to reconnoitre; as at the last bend of the road, through the fast falling twilight, the movements of the enemy could be descried on the opposite heights."

"What staff-officer?"

"General Ireton."

"The one who is engaged to his daughter, Bridget?"

"The same, at your service," replied Frank, who could not imagine what the engagement of Cromwell's daughter had to do with a military announcement.

"Are not those the three prisoners we sent up with the last transport, your Excellency?"

"They are talking of us," whispered Jürgen to his companions.

"Yes," said Fairfax, in reply to Herbert's question. "They have been trying to escape, but were driven back by the sentinels. It would be as well to despatch them before the break of day. They are only a burden to us, and we cannot now spare the soldiers necessary to guard them."

"Your Excellency," cried the colonel, "my general was of opinion that if one of the three were hung, it would be quite sufficient to set an example, the others might go free."

Each of the unfortunate creatures looked at his companions with compassion.

"I think so too," said Fairfax. "Here, drummer, your drum and the dice!"

Something of the soldier of the old school still clung to the general, Puritan as he was. Card-playing and dice were forbidden in his camp, but to throw the dice for life or death was a different matter, and one of frequent occurrence, and for that purpose a dice-box was always at hand.

"Prepare, you three," said Fairfax.

Many and many a time had the brave Jürgen rattled the dice, more often than he now liked to think about, for they, alas! had caused his career to take a very oblique direction.

He stepped up to the drum, which was placed on the turf, and which was glowing with the blaze of the fire. Groups of red-coats stood around, with their steel helmets and dark faces; regular salamanders, living only on fire. Jürgen knelt down and shook the dice-box.

"Hurrah!" he cried, as he turned it down, "we shall see if I still understand throwing the dice."

Fairfax and the officers bent down to count the throw.

"Bring torches," cried Fairfax, "the blaze dazzles me, and the wind drives the smoke over the drum."

Splinters of pine wood were lighted, and held high over the heads of the group, diffusing a red clear light over the whole place.

"A doublet," said Jürgen, still kneeling before the drum; "I said so. It is my throw—I have one more chance."

"My good fellow," said Frank Herbert,

"you forget that we are not playing for amusement."

"Glorious sport," replied Jürgen. "Ought it to be carried on less correctly here, under the eyes of his Excellency, than amidst the swindlers of the profession on the beer-bench? Sir, I know what is becoming."

"The fellow is right," said Fairfax: "the last throw shall be his. Now the other two."

They approached with shaking knees, and trembling head and limbs, but fortune is a blind maiden, and does not look her votaries in the face.

They shook—they threw; one twelve, the other fifteen.

"Thirteen wins," said Jürgen, and he took the dice-box, and first, like a true gambler, having made a vow, threw—nine.

"Lost!" cried he, in a voice which betrayed more anger and disappointment than fear. "I always said play is not to be trusted, and if it is my last word I stick to it. Now, lead me to death."

"You were deserving, perhaps, of a better fate than to dangle on a tree," said Fairfax. "You appear to me to possess courage, and a contempt of death; but you have been

condemned by a military tribunal, and God's judgment has confirmed the sentence. I give you five minutes," and here Fairfax drew out his watch, "and then all must be over. It is a pity," he murmured, turning away to give orders for the execution.

"It is indeed a pity," said Jürgen, casting a tender farewell glance at the dice on the drum; "but as one sins, so must one be punished. With the dice I began my life, and with the dice I end it."

The certainty and nearness of the last moment almost made a hero of this man.

The beating of drums and the firing of a signal were now heard through the darkness, a stormy hurrah, that sounded nearer and nearer, and the galloping of horses on the heath. The fire blazed up high, driven by a gust of wind, and its flickering flames threw their light upon Cromwell.

"Welcome, general!" cried Fairfax, as he cordially grasped the hand of the Commander-in-chief, whose superiority he recognised at all times without envy, and at the present moment with no feeling of mistrust. "I hope," continued he, "that the wonderful goodness of God, which has allowed you to

come at the right time, will still continue with us all."

"Your Excellency," replied Cromwell, "your faithful and energetic exertions for God and the kingdom will not be in vain. The rod of the oppressor will be broken as in the days of Midian," and he placed his left hand upon the hilt of the sword he had worn at Marston Moor, and dug the point of it firmly in the ground.

There was something forcible in his compact figure, and his sword seemed to form a part of himself. His chest, shoulders, and arms were broad, strong, and muscular, and formed for those laborious works he had to accomplish upon earth. He wore the coat of his red regiment, leather breeches, over which were drawn the high cavalry boots, and a helmet with the Parliamentary black and green plume. Officers of various regiments who belonged to his staff, had come with him, and in his rear was a gallant regiment composed of citizens and farmers who had embarked in the war for conscience' sake.

In the group of officers were also Richard Cromwell, a captain in the general's own body-

guard, and Henry Cromwell, captain in Harrison's regiment.

"By my faith, Claypole," cried Richard, to a particularly elegant young officer close by, "it does not look much like the refreshment here, on which I have been reckoning the whole evening. By Jove! a campaign is a wearisome thing, and one pays dearly enough for a little bit of fame."

"Hush!" said Claypole, pointing with an arch smile to Cromwell, "if your father heard you!"

"So he may for what I care. It is not every one who is born for war, but if there must be war, by Jove! a soldier must now and then have his rest and meals. But look there, Claypole! here's something of a different kind."

"Yes, indeed," replied the latter, "they are leading a poor wretch to death; he has a rope round his neck."

"Well, it is a diversion," said Richard; "let us go closer and watch the drama."

They dismounted from their horses as the procession moved towards them.

Jürgen was taking his last walk upon earth between two ministers, one of whom was

Hugh Peters, who wore a long sword and a high helmet, and who was as ready with his tongue as the captains (whose uniform he wore) were with their swords. He was a combative man, and when he perceived that a chaplain of the Presbyterian persuasion was taking possession of the poor soul to prepare it for its passage to heaven, he took steps, being a staunch Independent, to gain the victim for himself. He soon, however, fell into such a dispute on dogmatic subtleties with his opponent, that the object of their escorting the poor sinner was quite lost sight of. The whole procession came to a stand-still in order that the two ministers might express themselves more thoroughly.

“Let them go on disputing,” thought Jürgen; “I have nothing to lose—I can wait. They are now in the eighth century, far away in the Promised Land, and by the time they return to the heights of Naseby, it will be day-light.”

Although so close to the dark gate, he once more cast a glance on the life around him, and this glance fell upon Richard Cromwell, who, with his friend Claypole, was looking on. In an instant they recognised each other.

"Why, surely you are George," cried Richard, as he stood transfixed with astonishment before the prisoner with a rope round his neck. "George Joyce!"

"Hush," said the delinquent, "do not mention my father's name: do not insult him. Call me Jürgen; under this name have I lived, and under it will I die."

Richard Cromwell scarcely knew whether to smile or be sad.

"How have you come, Jürgen, into this unfortunate position?" said he: "you, the son of such an excellent father, who has always been so true to the Parliament."

"That is just it," replied Jürgen, mournfully; "I was a disgrace to him."

"Here is my father," whispered Richard, pointing to the general, who had been hitherto engaged in conversation with Fairfax, but who now turned towards the crowd, where the dispute of the two ministers was growing more and more violent.

"I should have recognised him amongst a thousand," replied Jürgen.

The dauntless courage of this man seemed almost to desert him as he felt the severe penetrating look of the general fixed upon

him, but he took heart, and, with the cry "mercy," threw himself at Cromwell's feet.

The general looked at him gravely.

"Who are you?" he asked.

"I am afraid," said Jürgen, "that the name under which I have been condemned to be hung, does not reflect any particular honour upon that for whose sake I plead for mercy."

"Father," said Richard, "he is the son of the tailor in the city, the alderman with whom you and the Parliamentary committee dined about three years ago, when the King left the city."

"His name is Joyce," said Cromwell, with that look which seemed to pierce through the events themselves. There stood the prodigal son with a rope round his neck.

A loud barking of dogs, and soon after the clattering of arms and horses resounded from the village.

"They are returning from the outposts," said Cromwell. "Step aside," added he, turning to Jürgen, "and await my decision."

The night was far advanced: the village clock had already struck twelve.

The troopers advanced, led by Ireton: they

brought prisoners and news of the enemy, for they had surprised an outpost. The Royalists were nearer than had been supposed, and it was resolved to attack them by daybreak.

“Joyce,” said Cromwell, “step forward. God has placed the sword of the Parliament in our hands for the terror of evil-doers, and for the praise of those who act according to His will. Death hovers over your head, but the uplifted hand of your father pleads for you ; and at this moment, when we are invoking the especial mercy and protection of God, *we* will not sit in judgment upon you, but leave you to the Most High. Here is a sword and a musket. To-morrow you shall stand in the front lines of the battle. To God belong both life and death. If He destine you to life so much the better. A man, who, like you, has looked death in the face, comes back to life a very different being.”

These words completely melted Jürgen’s heart. He threw himself weeping at Cromwell’s feet, and the tears he shed were those of sincere repentance.

“My life from henceforth belongs to you, General ; do with me what you will.”

Little Mary was standing at the door of

Fairfax's tent. Frightened by the noise and confusion occasioned by the decision of the war council, she had left her bed and appeared in her little white night-dress like an angel of mercy. She stretched out her arms towards Cromwell, as he looked at her, and ran up to him.

"I love you very much," said she, "because you have given this poor man his life;" and she nestled fearlessly up to the formidable man, who held the fate of his country in his hands.

"It is time for you to get ready now, Mary," said her father. "Your horse is waiting. You must keep in the rear, until your father comes, if it please God, to kiss you after the battle."

The hours of the night went past, and the fires were extinguished. During the night the troops had completed their march, and the whole army was now collected on the plain. The rising sun, glittering on thousands of helmets, pikes, and muskets, saw them on their knees, singing their war-song, the 149th psalm. As they repeated the verse—"To bind their kings in chains, and their nobles with links of iron," the war-cry of the Royal-

ists resounded from the ravine, "The Queen Maria."

The rebel army rose from their knees, and at the word of command, "Forward," the first squadron of Ironsides marched to their battle-cry—

"IN GOD IS OUR TRUST!"

CHAPTER X.

AFTER THE BATTLE OF NASEBY.

THE battle of Naseby decided the fate of the English Civil War. On the evening of the 14th June, 1645, there was no longer a Royalist Army in England, but only a few scattered regiments; no longer a King, but only a fugitive, who had lost his crown and was escaping for his life! Everywhere the Royal flags were lowered, and the whole of England belonged to the Parliament.

Many of the ladies who had hung so gracefully on the arms of the Cavaliers at Market Harborough the evening before the battle, had fallen into the hands of the conqueror, and amongst them was Lady Dysart. The fascinating Countess, when led before Cromwell, neither lost her courage nor presence of mind, nor forgot to exercise upon him the magic power of her eyes. Nothing authentic

is known of this interview, but it is at least certain that she was permitted to return to London and to retain undisturbed possession of Ham House, her palace at Kingston on Thames.

It is also more than probable that the Duke of Buckingham was indebted to the intercession of the irresistible Countess for the important amelioration of his position, as both he and his brother Francis had been taken prisoners at the surrender of Oxford. The Duke was reinstated by the Parliament in the greatest portion of his possessions, and his father's mansion, the renowned York House in the Strand, was placed at his disposal, on condition that he never again bore arms against the Parliament; and in truth, the only evidences of his public activity consisted in the fines that he and his brother had to pay for the desecration of the sabbath.

A circumstance, which deeply compromised the King, was the seizure of his secret correspondence with Henrietta Maria. The letter which Sir Harry Slingsby had brought to the Royalist camp at the risk of his life, was thus read throughout the whole of England, and contributed much to his downfall. Soon after

the King was delivered by the Scotch into the hands of the Parliament, and although treated with all external marks of respect, he was in reality no better than a prisoner in the castle of Holmby.

The Presbyterians were for some time the dominant party in Parliament, and signalized their reign by the greatest intolerance on religious matters. They unrelentingly pursued their plan of instituting *one* form of worship, that of the Scotch Church, throughout the two kingdoms. A council of theologians sat daily in London, and sent commissioners into the various counties to remove all clergymen who refused to subscribe to the Covenant.

Our friends of Childerley were not amongst the least sufferers by these harsh and stringent measures ; for although the little village lay beyond the radius in which the London committee was pre-eminently active, the good Sir Tobias had an adversary in that city, who, if not powerful himself, knew how to make use, for his own purposes, of the power of the reigning party.

Zedekiah Pickerling, for it was he, had so won the ear of the London synod by his

piety and Bible quotations, in conjunction with the secret information he could furnish, that they soon afterwards despatched a committee to Cambridge with the view of making the vicar of Childerley conform to the Covenant. This was the first trump card played by Zedekiah against his former master, the beginning only, as he flattered himself, but a blow that would hit the old Cavalier in his most sensitive part, and show him at the same time what sort of an opponent he had to deal with.

Dr. Hewitt was not altogether unprepared for the storm about to break over his head, and rejoiced even in the prospect of bearing witness for the suffering Church.

It was on a sunny spring afternoon that the summons reached him, and he immediately repaired to the castle, to communicate the intelligence to his friends, and to take leave of them for a few days.

About the same time that he was setting out, the two girls, Olivia and Manuella, were resting under the shade of a lime tree. It was a glorious afternoon, and the pretty landscape of river and meadow lay spread before them. Olivia was gazing dreamily into the

distance upon the sunny brightness, as if she were expecting something from thence. Manuella's large dark eyes were fixed upon a little volume bound in purple and gold ; it was the book which Olivia had received as a remembrance from Frank Herbert, "Milton's Poems." Olivia's day-dreams were ever of the brave young knight, who once had come this way, and she hoped and secretly longed that he might again return. She was still so young, and young girls have time, like the enchanted beauty in the castle, to await the arrival of the prince. Manuella's eyes were fixed upon something more definite, for she was reading Milton's lovely sonnet to the "Nightingale."

"Manuella," said Olivia, after a silence which often says so much between two young hearts, "it was just such an afternoon as this."

Manuella looked up, and cast a glance full of gratitude at the sweet girl to whom she owed everything—her life, and more than that, the restoration to her self-respect. Olivia had watched by her couch until her recovery ; and then by her earnest entreaties had induced her father, who regarded the intruder with no


friendly eye, to grant her a shelter, and the knight had too high an idea of hospitality to infringe it either by word or deed. Manuella felt, however, she was only endured by Sir Tobias, whilst with Olivia she was truly at home, and the two girls were scarcely ever seen apart.

In order to understand how Manuella, a child of that people, who even in the most trifling matters (especially as regards the preparation of food), keep themselves separate from all holding other forms of belief, it must be explained that she belonged to the Portuguese branch of the Jewish faith, namely to that portion which for centuries had inhabited the sunny lands of Spain and Portugal, and enjoyed the highest honours of those courts. By their constant intercourse with the most noble and influential classes in the land, they gradually learned to moderate the severity of their observances, which even in our own time makes any social connexion between Jew and Christian impossible. It must not be supposed that this daughter of one of the richest and most illustrious houses, which had passed through all the later cruel persecutions of the Portuguese Inquisition, renounced without

compunction the prescribed forms of her religion ; but destiny had placed her amidst strangers, and she was compelled to follow the example of thousands of her people. She now understood English quite well, but it was Milton's Poems that gave her the first insight into the true genius of the language. Olivia valued the book of the absent giver highly, but she seldom read it. With a nature full of poetry, the destiny of this sweet fair girl seemed to be to breathe and diffuse, but not to read it. Manuella, on the contrary, was far more powerfully attracted by those sounds from unseen worlds, which speak to us in poetry.

"You know, Olivia," she said in answer to her friend, "that I can only look back upon that time as a very fearful and gloomy dream. There was only one bright interlude in it, when two eyes seemed to hover over me, and high over my head was the fresh verdure of the forest and the blue sky. It was as if eternity were waiting to receive me, but the dark veil soon fell heavily over me once more, and when I awoke, you, my guardian angel, were standing by my bed-side."

She pressed her friend's hand fervently to her lips.



"You have no recollection of him; you cannot picture him to yourself?" pursued Olivia.

"How could I? He was the preserver of my life, and that is enough for me. You and he are ever together in my thoughts."

Olivia blushed.

"The only remembrance I have of him," continued Manuella, "is the scarf which he wore and with which he staunched my bleeding wound. I often wish I had never seen him; you must not think me ungrateful, Olivia, but misfortune renders one mistrustful."

"Manuella," cried Olivia, "I love you as my sister, and you are like a daughter in the house."

"You have, indeed, sheltered me with your love, and though well acquainted with my past, have overlooked everything. You have raised up again the broken bud of Judah's stem."

Olivia looked anxiously around.

"Hush!" she whispered, "we may be heard."

"Cannot you understand," cried Manuella, bitterly, "what is gnawing at my heart? You

have often asked me about the Duke of Buckingham. Oh ! how thoughtless it was of me ever to have confided my honour to his hands. I do not repent having left my father's house, however miserable I may feel, for unless I had adopted this resolution, I should have been chained for ever to a man whom I do not love. But though the consciousness of the purity of my soul upholds me, it is not sufficient *to be* virtuous, one must *appear* so as well. Appearances are against me, and it is believed that I love the duke, a fact which is sufficient in itself to make me detest the base creature, who would as willingly have abused my misfortune as he did my confidence. You have often persuaded me to return to my home, but I am too proud, Olivia, and my father also is too proud. He loved me very dearly, and even the compulsion he exercised to unite me to a man I could not love, arose from love, so anxious was he to see me rich and happy as he imagined.

"I had a friend, the son of a great and celebrated Rabbi in Amsterdam. His father had been my instructor, and some of my happiest hours were spent at the house of this Rabbi, Manasseh ben Israel. It was the

rendezvous of all the learned men and statesmen, poets and painters, of the day. He and my father had been acquainted from youth, and had both left Portugal at the time of the persecutions. My father devoted himself to money transactions and became a wealthy man; Manasseh, on the other hand, chose the quiet path of science, and was a teacher of God's word. He was of noble descent, and his wife was a daughter of the royal line of David. I grew up with their children, but Samuel was the one to whom I felt particularly drawn, and, I believe, Olivia, he loved me with all the pure unselfish sentiment of a boyish heart. My father perceived this growing inclination before I knew anything of it myself, and it was displeasing to him, for the Rabbi, though a great scholar and much esteemed, was very poor. My father looked upon riches and luxury as indispensable to happiness, so that when the son of one of the Richest nobles of Amsterdam, Miguel de Rivas Altas, offered me his hand, he considered it a great honour, though Miguel was an insufferable coxcomb whom I could not endure. My father was dumb with anger and astonishment when I expressed my aversion, and reproached me

with entertaining a preference for Samuel, the son of a tutor. Then, for the first time, it flashed upon me that Samuel might possibly love me, and that it was the fear of this love which made my father insist more resolutely than ever on my accepting the offer of Miguel."

"Had your father really made a mistake about your feelings for Samuel?" asked Olivia, looking searchingly at her friend.

"I had never thought of Samuel," replied Manuella, "otherwise than as a friend and brother. His gentle disposition and firm will exercised the best influence over my impetuous and somewhat domineering nature, and there was no one on whose esteem I set so high a value as on his. I felt I could have no secret from him; my heart either silently or by words revealed to him its every emotion."

"If that is not love," said Olivia, "it is something not very far from it."

"Do you think so?" replied Manuella, "then love is very different from the ideal I had formed of it. Can love come by degrees? Must it not take the heart at once by storm, so that it cannot do otherwise than love?"

"But if it may not love?" said Olivia, softly.

Poor child ! she was reflecting whether the invisible bond between herself and the absent knight was that of love. There was nothing vehement in her desire to see him again ; hers was not a passionate nature, but strong and tenacious, and one which, while recognising duty above everything, was severe to herself, but full of indulgence and forgiveness towards others. She saw the abyss which separated her from him she secretly loved, and knew there was no path which could cross it ; but she likewise felt that the image to which her heart clung could never be effaced by another. Although she had hardly breathed a word of her feelings for Frank Herbert, they were no secret to Manuella, who saw no further obstacle to the union of these two hearts than that which an earnest will might set aside, and she regarded the life she owed as much to the one as to the other, as pledged to promote their happiness in every possible way.

“ Did Samuel know anything of your intended escape ? ” asked Olivia, returning to the subject of their conversation.

“ He only heard of it when it was too late to take steps to prevent it. He received my farewell letter when the ship which bore me from

Holland was already far from the coast, but I know, however the world may judge me, he will believe me."

"And you have never heard anything of him since?" asked Olivia.

"How could I? He does not know where I am."

"But you might at least let *him* know. Think how happy you would make him, and your father too, Manuella."

"No," she replied, shaking her head, "the time is not come. The door might be opened, perhaps, to a repentant sinner, but what kind of a reception could I expect? My presence, my mere name, would suffice to make my father blush. They must first know that Manuella d'Acosta has not wavered one hair's breadth from the path of virtue. I have chosen exile with all its accompanying dangers, and it is my duty to suffer and stand firm. Besides, I have a work to accomplish: when that is done I shall return home."

CHAPTER XI.

THE GATHERING OF THE CLOUDS.

DURING the animated conversation of the two girls, the nightingale had been warbling its rich song, whilst the western sky and the whole plain shone with a brilliancy of colour almost too intense for the eye to bear. It was not the soft farewell of the setting sun, but rather the distress of nature.

Just at this time Sir Tobias and the vicar emerged from beneath the group of trees that over-arched the gateway of the park. The old inflexible Royalist is altered since we saw him last : he is somewhat aged, and slightly bent, for the blow struck at his party had left its traces on him. The very word " compromise " had to his mind something offensive in it. His honest straightforward character preferred ruin, if it were unavoidable, to the

recognition of a power he considered illegal, and which he hated in the very depths of his heart.

"May God take you under His protection ! doctor," said he, "and bring you safely back to us. Remember, that whatever the rascals may decree for you, *my* castle is *your* castle, and if they shut up our church, God help me ! but we will make a chapel out of the knights' hall, and honour our old Prayer Book amidst the armoury of my ancestors."

They had by this time reached the tree under which the two girls were sitting. The vicar addressed a few kind words to Manuella, of whom he knew nothing but that she was poor and defenceless, a sufficient plea, however, to recommend her to his heart. The knight, on the contrary, could not sufficiently master his feeling of repugnance to her to be able to utter a word, or even to acknowledge her presence, but turned immediately to his daughter.

Manuella, who bore this humiliating treatment in silence, rose, anxious to make her escape as usual, as she scrupulously avoided intruding herself on Sir Tobias. Olivia, however, held

her fast, for it grieved her to see Manuella shrink from the presence of her father.

“Why are you going?” she asked.

Manuella cast her eyes timidly to the ground, for to this there was no possible answer, though all present knew the reason well enough; this increased the displeasure of the knight, and he grew angry with his daughter.

He touched with his stick the book which had fallen to the ground. “You know,” said he, addressing his daughter, “that it annoys me to see that thing there; take it away.”

Manuella stooped to execute the peremptory order.

“Who asked you to do that?” cried the knight; “I was speaking only to Olivia.”

Olivia became crimson, and the tears rushed to her eyes; she placed her hand upon the poor girl’s shoulder as if to screen her from the severity of her father.

“That’s just how it is,” he growled. “Gifts are accepted from men, who with my consent would never dare to cross the threshold of this castle; gifts, and tokens of remembrance which should be flung aside with contempt if there were a spark of honour in your breast.”

Olivia was not accustomed to answer her father when he spoke in this way, and hitherto his opinion had always been hers. Whence then did she derive the courage to look at him and say in a modest but firm tone, "Honour never forbids my being grateful, and acknowledging the obligations of the past. Loyalty is above everything."

Sir Tobias was at first almost petrified by his daughter's audacity, but he soon recovered his speech, and, furious with anger, exclaimed, "Loyalty! what are you saying about loyalty? out with it; let me hear from your own mouth whether the daughter of a Cavalier dare speak of any other loyalty than that which she owes to her King? For if she do so——rather than see this spot of royalist ground touched by the rebels, these walls shall be razed to the ground, and myself buried beneath their ruins."

"Sir," said the vicar, who had kept aloof till now, "England is not thinking now of war, but longing for peace."

"Peace!" cried the knight, bitterly, "and the King in captivity, and his country in the hands of the Parliament! and you, doctor, on your way to Cambridge—ha, ha!" and he

laughed scornfully—"to take the Oath of the Covenant."

"I forgive you for saying so," said the vicar, with true Christian mildness, "though I have not deserved it at your hands."

The squire felt sorry for what he had said, and grasped the hand of the clergyman, as he added sadly, and with none of his previous violence—

"What wounds me more than all is, that my own daughter should rise against me."

"Father," said Olivia, imploringly, "what are you saying?"

"Everything is changed," was his answer; "nothing is as it used to be."

Olivia flung herself on her father's neck; he embraced her tenderly, but not with the perfect trust of other days.

"There is something between us," he said.

Olivia could not feel quite free from this imputation. Was it not true that she had avoided all mention of Frank Herbert, though her only motive had been consideration for her father, to whom she knew it was painful to have been indebted to an officer of the Parliamentary army? She was aware that in the depths of his heart he was too noble to

deny the obligation, and she had asked no more. Her unselfish heart was free at least from the egotism of love, and she was firmly resolved to struggle bravely, if needs be, against the feeling itself.

It was, therefore, in the truthfulness of her heart that she replied :

"Something is between us, you say. How can that be?"

"It is so," said her father. "In former days you came to me on every occasion ; you had no concealment from me. Now you are reserved."

The accusation was true, but it did not affect Olivia, as her silence she knew had been caused by her filial piety. Manuella, on the other hand, felt the knight's speech deeply, and the dreadful idea that it was she who was causing discord between two such hitherto united hearts, took possession of her.

"Oh, God of my fathers, only let it not be *that*," she murmured.

Olivia had at last relaxed her grasp, as she threw herself on her father's breast.

"I tell you," repeated the knight, "that there is something between us which portends us no good, and until that is removed—"

Olivia closed her father's lips with her hand, and turned to look for Manuella. She had disappeared.

"For Heaven's sake," cried Olivia, "where can she be gone?"

"Would to God that she might never return," replied the knight. "Now she is gone, I can speak out. She clings to you like a shadow, like a curse. I know what you are about to say, Olivia; it does honour to your heart, that she is quiet and inoffensive. She may be good and respectable, but my heart feels a repulsion to her, which it cannot overcome. There is something in her which has the effect of poison on me. She is a Catholic, too. It grieves me to see you so friendly with her, and my heart would feel lighter if she were gone."

The sky had meanwhile darkened ominously, and the clouds, from which the gorgeous colouring had slowly vanished, gathered in dense masses over the entire heavens.

"We shall have a storm," said the knight, who from his constant observation of nature was versed in its various signs.

"We had better hasten home."

As they were stepping through the shrub-

bery, John, the young squire, a very presentable lad of about seventeen, came towards them.

"Father," he cried, "a peasant from one of the villages near the forest has brought the news that a troop of Parliamentary soldiers has been seen about there, convoying a band of prisoners from the fortress at Bristol, who were quite unlike any people in this country."

"Oh! they are gipsies, I daresay," said Sir Tobias.

"No, no!" replied Johnny, "they don't look like that."

"Well, it is of very little consequence to us what kind of prisoners the Parliamentary soldiers are escorting. Let us make haste and get under shelter, for we are going to have a storm."

CHAPTER XII.

THE WANDERERS.

MANUELLA, on effecting her retreat unperceived by Olivia, had taken refuge in her own little room in the western tower. She sank on the ground as she crossed the threshold, and leaning her head against the corner of the bed, gave vent to the sorrow of her heart. There was but one slanting window, which looked towards the west, but the whole room was filled with the glorious light of the setting sun, whilst the curiously carved bars outside the windows, the flowers' and knights' heads on the cornices, and the gaping jaws of the dragons from which poured the water from the roof, were all on fire from the crimson glow. In Manuella's excited state, these dragons seemed to be making hideous faces at her, the flowers appeared to move,

and all the stone carvings to be endued with life. She sprang from the ground, and going up to the window, threw it open, but no refreshing air came in. Heavy clouds had gathered over the whole horizon, but in the far west the golden light still shone, and Manuella gazed with moistened eyes upon the lovely sunset, in which she could discover heavenly landscapes, and troops of pilgrims marching towards a beautiful city, full of the domes and cupolas of eastern countries.

"Oh!" sighed the maiden, "there is my home, in that magic land." And she stretched out her arms as if she would grasp the vision in the clouds. It was beginning to lighten.

"Oh! when shall I see my people and my home again?" was the cry of her heart. "In my childish years I was taught the history of my people, how they sat and wept by the waters of Babylon, when they thought of thee O Zion! There in the heavens I see thy dazzling image, and here in my heart will I faithfully guard it. In my parents' house, surrounded by care and love, I knew nothing of Thee, my God; but now that Thou hast led me into exile, my heart cries out for Zion, and I realize all the misery of

my people. God of my fathers ! forsake me not. Give me courage in suffering, that I may acknowledge Thy name, and perseverance and strength to cling to Thee."

A fearful clap of thunder terrified the maiden in the midst of her prayer. The sky had become quite black, and the vision in the west had vanished. The whole vault of the heavens groaned with the thunder, which passed with a menacing rumble through the clouds. The evening had given place to dark night. Manuella could just distinguish that portion of the courtyard which led to the drawbridge upon which her window looked.

"Surely," she thought, "it is thronged with people ; but who can they be ?"

She heard a confused noise of many voices, but she could not understand the words, though she listened attentively. Suddenly there was a savage barking of dogs, followed by heartrending cries.

"Merciful God !" cried Manuella, "they have let the dogs loose upon them."

At this moment a crash of thunder rent the air, then a vivid flash of lightning, that lasted for several seconds, transforming the darkness of night into a bluish daylight, and

revealing to Manuella the group upon the drawbridge. It was headed by an aged man of venerable exterior, who, turning his eyes devoutly towards the lightning, pronounced the following words, which fell like familiar sounds on Manuella's ears :

"*Baruch atha Adonai!* Praised be Thou Eternal One, King of the world, whose Strength and Almighty Power fill the universe !"

The castle gate had been closed to strangers, but loud knocks for admission were now heard.

"That is not the hand of a suppliant," said Sir Tobias, who stood in the court surrounded by his bull-dogs ; "that sounds like a command, but here is the answer."

And he gave a signal to the dogs, upon which they rushed furiously towards the gate.

"Sir Tobias," said a voice from without, "you were much more friendly to me once when I stood upon this bridge."

"God help me !" cried the knight, "but I seem to know the voice, a brave voice, and more powerful than all my dogs together ; I

respect such a voice, I must know the name of the owner."

"My good sir," was the answer, "I am grieved from my very heart to burden *you* of all people, but the thunder and pouring rain must be my excuse, and I should be paying you a bad compliment if I preferred your village to your castle. I have not forgotten your hospitality, and I am tremendously hungry."

"Ah! by your appetite I recognise you," cried the knight. "You are Jürgen, the man of No-party."

"Alas for me!" thought Jürgen to himself, "if your hospitality depends upon my being of No-party, I shall come badly off. Yes," he cried aloud, "I am Jürgen at any rate; only open the gate."

"You must first satisfy me as to how you come to be with the rebels, whom may the ——" The knight broke off just in time, recollecting that a troop of Parliamentary soldiers was standing before his gate. "Tell me that you are their prisoner, and have been ill-treated."

"Yes, Sir Knight, and so I have been. I have been condemned to death, and have

stood with a rope round my neck,—but no !” he said, as if angry with himself, “I won’t try and deceive him. Open the door, Sir Knight : you know I am your friend, and you wouldn’t leave a friend out in the rain.”

“The fellow is right,” muttered Sir Tobias, “it is the least one can do for a poor wretch.”

He gave orders for the large iron bolts to be withdrawn, and for torches and lanterns to be brought. But who can describe the indignation of the knight when he saw that Jürgen wore the uniform of a cornet in the Parliamentary army ?

“Miserable creature !” he cried, “who are you ?”

“Jürgen Joyce, at your service ; cornet in Cromwell’s own regiment.”

For the benefit of our readers it must be explained that Jürgen after his forgiveness by Cromwell, had been placed in the front lines at the battle of Naseby, where he had displayed a calm heroic courage. Cromwell’s words had stirred the very depths of his heart, and had bound him to him for ever. Many fell around him, and many retreated firing as Prince Rupert’s squadron charged furiously, but Jürgen remained at the post assigned him by the

general. At the close of the day his little band of three hundred men was reduced to about thirty, and all the officers had fallen.

"Comrades," cried he, "we won't flinch from the spot."

"Amen," responded the Ironsides.

At one time Jürgen had had the good fortune to fight hand to hand with a standard-bearer, and to wrest his banner from him, with which he returned to his post. When he presented the captured flag to Cromwell, after the battle, in the same hall of the hostelry at Harborough, where the Cavaliers the evening before had met so gaily, the general praised him for his brave conduct, and said,

"For this I will give you one of my own flags to carry ; from henceforth you are a cornet in my regiment."

Sir Tobias Cutts, however, had no respect for this uniform, and called out,—

"Knave that you are ! You are no better than a traitor, and deserve to be hanged."

"Don't talk of hanging, dear sir," said Jürgen, "it makes no impression on me ; but you must take care of my people—they are rather sensitive on that point. You may insult me as much as you please, but if I

were ten times a cornet I should never forget your goodness, and how you fed me."

"I wish the food had choked you," cried Sir Tobias, "rather than I should have fed a rebel! What is all this rabble you've brought with you?"

"Rabble! well you may be right there; they are prisoners from Bristol; ragged folk whom we are going to ship off sooner or later to the Tobacco Islands. They are Jews."

"Jews!" cried the knight, "and you dare to sully my castle with those outcasts! Do you think that because my King is helpless and in prison, that I will submit to this disgrace? Go, tell your general, that before the threshold of my ancestors is defiled by this accursed people, he must first burn the house over my head, and that I swear, and now seize them!" and with these words he set on the dogs. "Powder is too good for them."

The furious barking of the bloodhounds echoed through the court, and mingled with the shrieks of the children and the pitiful wailing of the women. Suddenly the voice of a young man exclaimed: "He who commanded the waters of the Red Sea to stand still, and they stood still, may He strike with

His hand this hard-hearted man, and render him powerless !”

These awful words sounded like a curse, and were pronounced amidst the roaring of the thunder. A flash of lightning which rent the air, was succeeded by a deafening peal of thunder. There was a smell of sulphur, and the air was filled with smoke. “Fire! fire!” was the cry. The lightning had struck the western tower of the castle, inhabited by Manuella.

She, however, had already left it, and might be seen beneath the gateway, which was brightly illumined by the reflection of the flames. The poor wanderers looked at her in amazement, for to them she seemed to have issued from the lightning, her figure shone out so from the blaze. Addressing these people, thus remarkably rescued, in their own language, Portuguese, she exclaimed, “Step not over the threshold of this house, which has been touched by the finger of God, but pray for your enemies ; march on, and let me go with you.” She descended the steps to the drawbridge, and in another moment was amongst her own people, who joyfully gathered round her.

"Who are you?" they asked, thronging to kiss the hand of the beautiful creature.

"Ask me not," she replied; "my name need be nothing to you."

She felt her hand grasped by some man standing near her, and a strong voice said in an undertone, "I recognise you, Manuella d'Acosta."

It was the same voice which had pronounced the curse over Childerley House.

"Isaac de Castro!" exclaimed the girl, with joyful surprise, for the youth who had seized her hand was a near relation. But he answered her in a cold gloomy manner:

"You are right to suppress your name, for most of these unfortunate creatures are Jews from Amsterdam; but poor and miserable as they are, there is not one who would not shun you if they knew who you were."

"Oh, Isaac!" pleaded Manuella, retaining the hand he endeavoured to withdraw. "If what you say is true, it would have been better for me if the lightning had struck me as it struck that tower."

"It would have been better," said De Castro severely; "better for you, and better for him whom you once called father. For him

you live no longer ; he has mourned you as dead. You are dead to your people, and are cast out of your community."

Then Manuella's head sunk, and tears rolled down her cheeks.

Thus was she found by Cornet Joyce, who was so electrified at the sight that he straightway forgot his hunger and his intention of helping to extinguish the flames. "Let it burn for what I care," said he : "it is the knight's own fault ; he won't allow me to touch his well."

So saying he betook himself to the bridge upon which Manuella was standing.

"Beautiful girl !" he began : "I know who you are ; but you may call me a villain if I treat you with less respect on that account. You know who speaks to you ?"

Manuella drew back frightened at his hoarse voice, which he attributed to a chill received in Germany ; but perhaps the potations of wine and brandy he had imbibed had something to do with it.

"Are you afraid of me ?" he asked, noticing her shrinking, and trying to speak more softly. "Be easy—I am your friend. Thank God, I see you safe and sound, and no longer in the

hateful page's disguise in which I saw you last, when you lay wounded in the forest of Longstow. What! still silent. Don't I please you? In such bad weather as this one soldier looks very much like another, but it is the heart;" and he struck his breast.

Manuella for the first time opened her lips:

"Those unfortunate creatures," she said, pointing to the crowd, "have not observed much of that."

"Ah! that is a different matter," replied Jürgen; "they are prisoners, and—but I forgot, the young lady from the castle forbade me to say it."

"Speak out—what are they?"

"Well," stammered the cornet, growing very red, "they are Jews!"

"And am I not a Jewess?"

"Certainly," responded Jürgen; "but no one shall hear it from me, on my word of honour, for you are too good to be one."

"I do not wish to be anything better," cried Manuella.

"I don't know whether you could be better, but I know that you have made me better. Since I first saw you in your father's house,

I have been a different man. Heaven knows I felt as I had never felt before ; I did not relish my food, nor my drink, either, (oh ! you worthy soul !) and I could have laid myself on a funeral pile, if it had been required, from pure love for you. Afterwards, in the turmoil of war, I forgot you—you must not take it ill—and my appetite returned, but when I saw you again in the castle, all the old feeling revived, and I swore to become a better man for your sake ; but then I was taken prisoner, and condemned to death. Even then, I said to myself, what could one not do for such a girl ? But I was rescued, and afterwards took part in the battle of Naseby, where I went through my trial honourably, and here I am alive to tell you, dearest girl, that Jürgen Joyce loves you ; but you need not be afraid, for I know well enough that a man who has roughed it through the world, if he has tried to be ever so good, is no fit match for you, without saying anything of your being a Jewess, and myself a Christian, which I intend to remain as long as God gives me life. But I will not speak any more of my love, only be kind to me, Manuella, and let me protect you from

the dangers which threaten you, and, if needs be, encounter death for your sake."

Manuella, who had just been crushed by the severity of her cousin, was deeply moved by the unselfish love of the rough soldier, and gave him her hand, which he warmly grasped.

"Jürgen," said she, "you must no longer be harsh and cruel to my fellow-believers."

"I should be a rascal if I were. Good people," cried he, in a kind manner, "we will go to the village, where they will be more hospitable to us perhaps. Form into line and march."

Jürgen loved to issue military orders; as he pronounced the last word he noticed that Manuella was no longer by his side. She had turned back to the castle, irresistibly impelled to seek her friend once more, whom she found in the courtyard, by the light of the still blazing flames.

"Olivia!" she cried, "farewell, farewell!"

Through the crash of the falling beams Olivia heard this voice which filled her with joy. Her anxiety had been terrible for the fate of her friend, as she knew she had sought the western tower after the scene with Sir Tobias. She dared not mention her fears to

her father, but she had conjured Martin Bumpus to see after the unfortunate girl.

We may picture therefore the delight with which she now hastened up to Manuella.

"Thank God, you are alive!" she cried, extending her arms, but her eyes sank as she saw that her friend wore a green silk sash spangled with gold, upon which a spot of blood was visible. It was Frank Herbert's sash, with which the young soldier had bound Manuella's wound, and which the latter had preserved as the only remembrance of him.

"Forgive me," entreated Manuella, as she noticed Olivia's glance: "it is all that I have taken with me from Childerley."

"What," exclaimed Olivia, much affected, "do you want to leave us? Never must that be. You are proud, Manuella, and I see how it is, my father has been harsh with you."

"No," replied Manuella, "he was not harsh. What he said was true, and I feel that I have stood between him and you—I dare not remain, let me go."

"Oh, I cannot let you go," cried Olivia, clasping the girl in her arms.

For a moment they held each other in a warm embrace, and so absorbed were they by

their sorrowful parting that they were quite unconscious of the dangerous spot upon which they were standing. They were just beneath the burning tower, and had it not been for Jürgen, who had come in search of Manuella, they must have been killed by the falling of a beam, as the walls were cracking in the heat, and the stones gradually becoming loosened. The instant after they had been pulled back by his powerful hand, a tremendous block of stone disengaged itself, and fell with a crash upon the very spot where they had stood. Before Olivia could recover from the shock, Jürgen had lifted Manuella up in his arms, and disappeared with her under the shadow of the bridge.

CHAPTER XIII.

A SPRING MORNING.

A MERCIFUL and abundant fall of rain effectually extinguished the flames, and though the western tower was burnt out, no further damage had been done, and the castle was in a far better condition than most royalist houses, which were pulled down that the building materials might be sold to pay the arrears of some regiment. Towards day-break the rain ceased, and one of those lovely mornings succeeded in which the world appears to be fresh from the hands of its Creator.

Through the forest of Longstow, alive with the songs of birds, and sweet with the aroma of a thousand flowers, Jürgen passed that morning with Manuella and his little band. Although but one night had passed since

Manuella had left Childerley, to her it seemed as if an eternity had separated her from it. She sat upon Jürgen's horse, upon which he had placed her when they left the village, for she was thoroughly exhausted, having refused all the refreshment hospitably offered by Hannah, Martin Bumpus' wife. The Jewish prisoners had contented themselves with a little bread, over which they first asked a blessing, and with a drink of water, of which they poured a little on the ground before tasting it, according to the formula of their religion. Jürgen had neither political nor religious scruples, and ate heartily of the mutton that had been fed on royal pastures, seasoning it with a good draught from the tankard bearing the arms of a Cavalier.

He then gave the order to march, and walked by Manuella's side, chatting to her about his horse. "It's the right horse for the right man," he cried: "it belonged first to a Royalist, but after the battle of Naseby it turned about and became the property of a Parliamentary cornet. It's a fine creature, and henceforth I shall call it, 'Manuella.' Ho, ho! Manuella! Hurrah, Manuella!"

Jürgen's respectful conduct to Manuella

placed her far above her fellow-believers in the eyes of his soldiers, a distinction which distressed her, and which she would have refused had she been able to share in the fatigues of her people. They were indebted to her for the kind treatment they received from Jürgen, and grew quite fond of her, telling her their names and histories ; many she knew by sight, having often seen them in the synagogue, or in the streets. Only once was her father's name mentioned, and then her feelings almost overpowered her. "He who had the abandoned daughter," said one of the women. "God, in His goodness, inflict anything on me but that!" and the poor creature, bowed with misery and sorrow, laid her hand on the head of a half-grown girl. Not one of them recognised Manuella, though most of them must have seen her as a child. She was now in the first bloom of womanhood, and possessed all the noble beauty of her southern descent. De Castro studiously avoided her, and she, on her part, was afraid of him. Amongst the whole troop of prisoners there was only one German family—that of Abraham of the Green Shield. It was many years since Abraham had left his native city of

Worms, where, under the sign of his Green Shield, he had enjoyed the greatest prosperity, and negotiated many money transactions with the Electoral Prince, afterwards Frederick V., King of Bohemia.

Shortly before the premature death of that monarch, Abraham had left his home, and gone to England, having been recommended by Frederick V. to Charles I., his brother-in-law, as a skilful finance agent, whose wealth and advice might be useful in certain vexatious matters which had arisen between the King and Parliament, chiefly of a financial nature. The only advantage Abraham derived from this honourable mission was the loss of his fortune, whilst his life was in jeopardy in London.

"The Queen has brought the Jesuits, and the King the Jews, into the country," was the universal cry. After the battle of Naseby, he took refuge with his family in the city of Bristol, until it was blockaded by the united forces of Fairfax and Cromwell. Before, however, the Channel was shut in by the blockade, a ship appeared upon the deserted waters, sailing under a Dutch flag, bringing, as Prince Rupert imagined, provisions or re-inforce-

ments ; but what was his vexation and disappointment when instead of the expected troops or supplies, the vessel contained only Portuguese Jews, who had embarked at Amsterdam, intending to proceed to Brazil, and there to settle in the town of Pernambuco, where there was already a large Jewish community. It was not until they were in the Irish Sea that they heard that war had broken out between the Dutch and Portuguese in Brazil, and scarcely had they passed the Land's End, when a Portuguese privateer gave chase to them, and they ran for refuge into the Bristol Channel, and entering the harbour, came into Bristol.

As there was no means of getting rid of the unwelcome guests, the blockade being completed immediately after their arrival, Prince Rupert, who held the town, was obliged to shut them up in the fortress, where their condition, however, was greatly ameliorated by Abraham of the Green Shield, who, from his upright conduct, had earned an excellent reputation in the city. After the capitulation of Bristol, which took place soon after, the victors, who treated the conquered citizens with great moderation, for

such was Cromwell's principle of action, showed themselves most severe towards the foreign interlopers. They even spoke of shooting them on the spot, but a more merciful proposition gained the day; they were to receive their sentence from the lips of the commander-in-chief himself, and it is on this expedition that we are introduced to them.

Isaac de Castro kept himself gloomily apart from the others. He was still very young, but possessed all the maturity of vigour and beauty, so observable in the men of the south. His ancestors dated back from the days of David, and even under the rags of captivity, his noble origin could be discerned. The most striking feature in his character was his fervid love for Judaism, which amounted indeed to fanaticism.

The startling news that in the wilds of America traces of the ten tribes had been discovered, had fired this enthusiastic soul, and to verify the truth of this report, he had started from Amsterdam, feeling himself to be entrusted with a sacred mission. The frustration of his dearest hopes was gall and wormwood to him. To be a prisoner, con-

demned to inactivity, whilst the precious time flew by, made his heart boil with indignation. Manuella, who was at once attracted and repelled by him, scarcely ventured to address him ; but when she did at last thank him for the intelligence he had brought her from her home, sad as it was, and spoke of the hopelessness of her future lot, he seemed to find a pleasure in adding to her sorrow and self-reproach, instead of uttering words of comfort ; such was the gloomy harshness that characterized his religious enthusiasm.

“ You have deserved your fate, for you have forgotten your first duties, and sinned against your God,” was his uncompromising speech.

The troop was now ascending the only hill in this flat part of the country, from which a very pretty view could be obtained of Cambridge, and the surrounding neighbourhood.

“ Now, dear young lady,” said the gallant cornet, “ we are on the Gog-Magog Hills, and the town at our feet is Cambridge. The heath yonder, where you see the tents and the glitter of arms, is Kentford Heath, the camp of the Parliamentary army, and beyond,

to the north-west, are the towers of the cathedral of Ely, not a hundred steps from which is the house of our general, Oliver Cromwell."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE HALLS AND GARDENS OF CAMBRIDGE.

ON the afternoon of the same day, the vicar of Childerley might be seen walking in one of the quiet streets of Cambridge. Although the purpose of his journey thither was most eventful for his future life, and he was by no means insensible to the consequences of the step he was about to take, an untroubled peace possessed his soul, which was heightened by the contemplation of those spots so familiar to him in happier days. This was no time, however, to indulge in memories; instead, therefore, of revisiting Pembroke College, where he had begun his theological studies, he turned into the beautiful gardens of Sidney Sussex College, as the friend whom he especially wished to see, Frank Herbert, was quartered on the head-

master of that college. The dark shady avenue was quite deserted, and the solitary pedestrian, as he walked beneath the majestic trees, whose branches met over his head, reviewed with calmness his past life, and the future he was about to discuss with his friend. Dr. Hewitt was at this time upwards of thirty years of age, and his broad forehead and intellectual eye betokened the two qualities which determined his character, firmness and mildness.

His family, which had remained true to the clerical profession, belonged to the noble of the land, partly by marriage, and partly by the rank of knighthood, which had been conferred by different monarchs on various members of the family.

Clarendon, in his "History of the Rebellion," makes the following honourable mention of Dr. Hewitt:—"Dr. Hewitt, a distinguished preacher, and very orthodox, was born a gentleman, and educated a scholar, and was a clergyman before the outbreak of the Civil War."

Amidst the clouds which were gathering, and which soon overshadowed the whole of England, John Hewitt had entered upon his

profession, which he administered with all the zeal of a good churchman. Not one hair's breadth had he wavered, either in his doctrine or his example, from the principle that it became a subject to obey the King placed over him by God ; that the King owed to God alone the duty of responsibility, and that it was sinful for the people to assert a right of opposition. He had followed the course of public events with painful interest, and at the present moment his heart was far more full of patriotic hopes, and with the earnest wish that the peace which might be offered by the other side would be accepted, than by any fear of what threatened him personally. He had almost reached the end of the lime-tree avenue, and was gazing through the ancient gateway, which separates the garden from the college, when he saw upon the lawn of the fore-court of Sidney Sussex a group of young men. Most of them were attired in the university garb, but the centre figure was dressed as a military man, and the scarlet of his uniform shone in the dusky light of the gateway, which formed a frame to his stately figure.


As the doctor drew nearer, he recognised

the face as that of Frank Herbert, and perceived that he held a paper in his hand, from which he was reading, and that his countenance betrayed unusual dejection, whilst in some of the faces of the audience anger and sorrow were to be read, though in the majority a visible satisfaction and mischievous pleasure.

"What is the matter?" cried the doctor, stepping up to his friend without further ceremony, so much was he struck by the painful anxiety depicted on his countenance.

"John!" exclaimed Frank, "you have chosen an unlucky hour for our meeting, but nevertheless you are welcome," he added, cordially grasping his hand. After he had introduced his friend to those around, who recognised in Dr. Hewitt a steadfast adherent of loyalty, and one distinguished by the King himself, Frank said, in a suppressed voice, whilst the paper trembled in his hand:—"This document notifies, that at this very hour Oliver Cromwell is perhaps a prisoner in the Tower!"

The news fell like a thunder-clap on the vicar: he turned pale, and his eyes seemed to lose their lustre. "Then we are all lost!" he said, after a short pause.



“No, by Jove ! that we are not !” cried the colonel, grasping his sword. “As long as my sword and the army are in existence, we shall never be lost. Even should we have to march to London and destroy this nest of shop-keepers, we will have our general again, and for every hair of his head they have touched, a dozen of the miserable hagglers shall be nailed to their own door-posts. I know what you think, gentlemen,” he continued, as his sharp eye noticed their secret pleasure. “You imagine that with the fall of Cromwell the danger that threatens your cause is over, but nothing can be more false. Cromwell is the strength and arm of the nation—paralyze this arm and chaos will ensue. You may make merry, gentlemen, at his discomfiture, but let me tell you that you and your parchments will long be buried in the book-dust, disturbed only by the antiquary, when the morning twilight of that day of which he is the heralding star, will blazon the world with its rosy light.”

“Frank,” said the vicar, “you forget the spot on which you stand. You appeal to the future : to us, however, belongs the past, and we call upon you to respect it. These towers and halls will stand when you exist no longer,

and from them will issue fresh generations armed with faith and knowledge, to continue their struggle against the rebellion of mankind."

"You talk about these buildings," said Frank ; "but come and let me show you a tree in the garden of the adjoining college. It was planted about twenty years ago, by a pale weakly student, called the Lady of Christ's College ; and yet hundreds of years hence pilgrimages will be made to it as to a sacred relic. The traveller, as he stands before the old tree, will say, the man who planted it tore himself away from the charms of a contemplative life, and from the seductions of Italian art and beauty, to dedicate his pen to the service of his country, for it was John Milton who planted that tree."

"We have wandered very far from the subject. I do not see what the author of heretical controversies has to do with our subject."

"So far," said Frank Herbert, "that the day will come when Milton and Oliver Cromwell will be mentioned together as the greatest men of our time."

The doctor, anxious to break off the conversation before it reached a point when it might

be dangerous for him to listen, now reminded him of his promise to enlighten him as to his fears respecting Cromwell.

"Come with me to my rooms," said the colonel ; and with a hasty bow he took leave of the gentlemen, and conducted his friend to the comfortable quarters assigned him, as an officer of rank, in the master's lodge.

"I have long expected this," cried he, as he paced impatiently up and down the room, whilst the doctor sank into an arm-chair. "We should have brought matters to an end long ago : the ill-feeling between the Presbyterians and the army has reached a point at which negotiation is impossible. After our last victory my advice was, 'Use your arms before they are taken from you ;' but we have waited too long. They are already ordering the disbanding of our best regiments under the pretext that war is at an end. But we see through their designs ; they intend to conclude peace with the King independent of us, and we are to be the victims of the vengeance of both parties."

"His Majesty," said the vicar, "will never conclude such a peace."

"The King," cried Frank Herbert, bitterly,

"acts upon Machiavelli's maxim, 'that a prince cannot be bound by his word.'"

"And yet," said the vicar, "I know that messengers have passed to and fro between the army and the King!"

"Every thought of a treaty with the King, on whatever conditions, is no better than high treason."

"And yet the majority of the nation is ready to make an advance to the King."

"The nation has no political opinion. Parties do not form the nation. It is the privilege of the *minority*, when it knows itself to be in the right, to force its opinion on the *majority*!"

"To terrify it—that is to say."

"Yes, if you will have it so; for, although it is as necessary for the welfare of all as breath is to life, no privileged person will give up *voluntarily* his privileges, nor a sectary his independence. They must be *compelled*!"

"And if a peaceful compromise were attempted?"

"I know the army," replied Frank, with a sad smile; "it is like the lion's den—many a path leads into it, but *not one* leads out again. Perhaps, while we are discussing the future,

our fate is accomplished. We begged our general not to appear in London without the army, but he went, he said, to obey the orders of Parliament, and now it is reported that a Parliamentary committee has decided upon his imprisonment !”

At this moment there was a loud knocking at the door, and when Frank Herbert opened it, the sergeant of his regiment stood before him.

“ A man wishes to speak to you, who brings a message from the Synod ; he says his business requires haste.”

The colonel was not in the best of humours to receive an envoy from the authority he hated, but as a soldier and the commander of Cambridge, he could not refuse. “ Show him in,” he cried, “ and tell him we are also in a hurry !”

Accordingly a tall, eel-like figure entered, dressed in a long black coat of the Presbyterian cut. He made a humble obeisance, and twirled his hat between his long bony fingers.

The doctor had turned towards the book-case, in order not to interfere with the audience.

"Who are you?" asked the colonel sharply, for he seemed to know the man.

"It is a good sign that you do not recognise me," said the servant of the Ecclesiastical Assembly, "for since our last meeting I have become a changed man, both outwardly and inwardly; for is it not written in the 8th of Jeremiah, 'Shall he turn away, and not return?'"

"Leave the Scriptures alone," cried Frank angrily, "when you should be obeying orders, and tell me forthwith who you are, and what you want."

With some little hesitation, as though fearing the effect his answer might produce, the man answered,—

"My name is Zedekiah Pickerling."

"Then you are the greatest rascal that ever trod the earth," replied the colonel, with a contempt that would have crushed any one but the former miller of Childerley.

At this point the vicar turned round, and came forward.

"Do you not tremble before this gentleman?" continued the colonel. "Does not the sight of him recall all the black treachery you have plotted against your squire and

your superiors? I need scarcely tell you before whom you stand."

"Of course I know his reverence," replied Zedekiah, with ill-concealed maliciousness. "The ecclesiastical tribunal is already assembled before which he will have to appear in less than half-an-hour."

"Infamous creature!" thundered the colonel, "this is another of your doings."

"Why should I deny it? unworthy instrument that I am in the hands of the Lord!"

Here the corporal on guard stretched himself, and the clink of his iron armour sounded in the room.

"You are right, corporal," said Frank, "this conference exceeds the boundaries of propriety. If you have anything further to say," added he, turning with cold contempt to the Puritan, "say it at once, or I shall refuse to listen to you."

Upon being thus addressed, Zedekiah, with the same intolerable grin, felt with the greatest deliberation in his pocket, and at last brought forth a paper, which he handed to the colonel.

"This is a writ," said he, "drawn up by the assembly now sitting at Cambridge, which

you, as commandant of the town, are earnestly requested to sign, seeing that *as yet* we are under martial law."

And Zedekiah laid a strong emphasis on "as yet."

"Thank heaven it is so," cried Frank Herbert. "Who is the girl mentioned in this writ?"

"She is a person from some southern country, where Romish idolatry prevails, and is deeply involved in royalist and papistical plots. It is proved that in the disguise of a page, she was bringing a letter from that godless woman to the man who is now a prisoner at Holmby, when she was struck down by the judgment of God in the forest of Longstow, and the letter was carried to its destination by the notorious Duke of Buckingham. Shelter was then afforded her by a knight known to be among the disaffected of the land, upon whom the vengeance of God and the nation has likewise fallen. I, therefore, Zedekiah Pickerling, bear witness against this girl, who, by a miracle, is now delivered into our hands, having been brought into the camp this morning with a transport of prisoners."

"You villain!" broke in Frank Herbert, shaking him by the arm, "to dare to come to me with such a proposition."

Before the eyes of the young soldier, that morning in the forest of Longstow rose as fresh as ever, and whilst the poisonous denunciations of the hypocrite sounded in his ears, the remembrance of the fair, blue-eyed Olivia alone reached his heart. The white face and dark eyes of the person called "Manuella" in the writ seemed once more present to him.

"She is innocent," said the doctor, speaking for the first time, "and has been Olivia's intimate friend for nearly two years. An unhappy circumstance, about which I will tell you another time, obliged her to leave a house where she was loved by all who knew her."

"I am doubly responsible to the lady of Childerley for the safety of the foreigner," said Frank; "for it so happened that I was once called upon to be her protector, and what you tell me makes my duty all the more pleasant."

"And what is to become of the girl, whom the assembly have summoned before the tri-

bunal?" asked Zedekiah, taking care to keep at a good distance.

"The shield of the army will protect her."

"And the writ?"

"Is torn up," cried the colonel, throwing the pieces contemptuously under his feet.

"Torn up, as you would like to tear the Covenant," said Zedekiah; "but in the council of the Most High it is decreed otherwise. The mighty one is overthrown, Cromwell is a prisoner, and to-morrow the army will be scattered to the four winds, as it is written
_____"

The colonel's look was sufficient to make the ecclesiastical messenger depart in double quick time. Scarcely had the sound of his footsteps died away on the stone steps when the tower of Sidney Sussex struck twelve.

"It is time for me to present myself before the assembly," said Dr. Hewitt.

"Good-by, then!" said Frank. "I shall see you when it is all over."

CHAPTER XV.

THE EXAMINATION.

THE examination was short, and the doctor's demeanour suitable to the dignity of the cause he represented. He left no question unanswered, but avoided all discussion of opinion in which these ecclesiastical courts frequently indulged. Upon the judges' bench sat a lay-member, who took a special delight in controversy, and interrupted the court with his cross-questioning. This man had originally been a tailor in the city of London, where he was regarded as a God-fearing man, who made coats in the Presbyterian fashion for God-fearing people. He had suffered much from the Star-chamber in consequence of the conventicles he had held at his house, and the committees he had formed for the support of itinerant preachers, and his purse

had been considerably lightened by the fines he had had to pay. His fellow-citizens, to indemnify him for what he had suffered, had elected him alderman soon after the outbreak of the Civil War, and his importance had so increased, that he was now one of the city deputies in the Theological Assembly. The city was at this time the stronghold of Presbyterianism, and had been a powerful auxiliary to the Parliament in carrying out its resolution of imprisoning Cromwell.

From this member of the assembly the doctor had much to endure, his inquisitorial eye was ever fixed upon him, and his lips perpetually framed fresh questions.

The doctor was ready to admit the various accusations brought against him, such as using the Book of Common Prayer, kneeling, and wearing the vestments; and when asked why he had not conformed to the Proclamation of February, 1646, which established the Scotch church as the model throughout England, he replied, that in church matters he followed his conscience only. The president then asked him if he was aware that dismissal from his office would be the consequence of his refusing to take the Covenant oath?

Before he could answer the lay-member interposed, with the suggestion that the Covenant should first be explained, and the articles read out to the accused ; and upon the assent of the president the ex-tailor proceeded to expound the Covenant, after which the articles were read out by the secretary.

The doctor listened in silence, and at the conclusion declared, in answer to the president, that he entirely approved of the third article, viz., " We have no thought nor intention of diminishing his Majesty's rightful might and power," but that it was in flat contradiction to the other clauses.

" How ?" interrupted the lay-member. " Is not his Majesty in honourable captivity in Holmby Castle, and is he not being enlightened as to his errors, so that the Presbyterian Church will eventually triumph, and there will be but one fold and one Shepherd throughout England ?"

" You are mistaken," replied the doctor, " if you imagine his Majesty will ever lend his name to the uprooting of our Church. The ways of the Lord are unsearchable, but in His own good time He will make them clear to us. Meanwhile, I will humbly follow the

voice of my conscience, which calls upon me to stand and fall by the persecuted Church, and to reject the Covenant."

Whilst the court withdrew to consult, the vicar seated himself upon one of the benches, and leaning his elbow upon his knee, buried his face in his hands. He had long been prepared for the decision, but the consciousness that he could no longer be a champion for the holy cause in the pulpit or amongst his parishioners, was the first bitter feeling that disturbed his calm, well-balanced mind. He recalled the day and the hour when he had knelt in the Cathedral of Ely to receive the consecration of priest from the hands of the bishop, and his words, "Take thou authority to preach the Word of God and to minister the holy Sacraments," were still ringing in his ears, when the door opened and the members of the court re-entered.

As he stepped up to the bar to hear his sentence, he murmured softly to himself, "They may take my parish from me, but the Word of God and the power to preach it, *that* they can never take away."

The result of the consultation was exactly what the doctor had anticipated: he was de-

posed from his office, and the church of Childerley was to conform to the principles of the Presbytery. When asked if he had anything to object to the verdict, he replied in the negative, and was about to withdraw, when his way was obstructed by Zedekiah Pickering, who made his appearance in the most extraordinary plight. Blood was trickling from his forehead, and his white neckcloth was tied so tightly that he seemed to be choking.

"Air, air!" cried he, "I am being throttled!"

"What is the meaning of this outrageous conduct?" cried the president, who had just closed the sitting.

"My lord," he said, when his tie had been unloosed, "this is the way they treat the Church. Look at the fragments of your warrant, and then at the blood on my forehead."

"What has happened?" said the president, making a sign to the other gentlemen to remain.

Zedekiah, after relating the scene in the colonel's room, went on to say, "Full of just wrath at such a deed of violence, I was on my way to lay my complaint before you, when I was called back again: a courier from London

had arrived with despatches for your lordship." And, bowing to the president, Zedekiah was about to feel in his pocket for these papers, when his wound called loudly for his pocket-handkerchief, and thus caused him to forget his purpose. The president, disgusted at the sight, turned away, and fortunately for Zedekiah, he had not understood that there were despatches to be handed over to him, so that Zedekiah was allowed to continue his narrative uninterrupted: "I was setting out once more, when I accidentally met a soldier, whom I had known in former days. I recognised him, though he wore the uniform of a cornet and made a fearful noise with his long spurs. He was walking proudly past me, when I said, 'Mr. Cornet, you don't know me any longer, but I know you, for I have a glorious memory for such like——however, let that pass! Then you were, so to speak, in the service of the devil, but now you have changed your uniform and become a better man.'

" 'Good heavens!' he cried, recognising me all of a sudden. 'Why, I left you half-dead, and here you are alive again. How much a man can go through! I have had the rope

round my neck, and now I am wearing these epaulets. Ah! my friend, we are all sinners, but the mercy of God is great!’ Herewith he conducted me to a low inn. My lord, I am not such a castaway as to have gone with this son of perdition unless I had had an object. I knew he was the leader of the little troop which had brought the prisoners into the camp, and amongst them the girl on whose track we are, and I felt he might be useful to us. So I let him drink and brag of his deeds, and he emptied one enormous tankard after another, seasoning them with a verse or two from Job, about the war-horse, which he applied to himself. After a time he grew melancholy, tears ran down his cheeks, and as he drank he told me what a good-for-nothing fellow he had been, and how he had heaped sorrow and disgrace upon the hoary head of his father. Now, thinking my opportunity had come, I represented to him in the kindest manner, that a good action performed by a repentant heart atoned for much, and that he was the chosen instrument in the hands of the Lord to deliver up the malefactress he had brought into the camp this morning.

“ ‘What malefactress?’ he asked, and I

saw the veins in his forehead beginning to swell. I took courage, however, and mentioned the name, upon which he sprang up like a wild animal, and, seizing me by the neckcloth, so that he almost choked me, he dealt me such a blow on the forehead with the tankard, that I fell to the ground insensible, and when I came to myself he was giving me a parting kick before he took himself off."

Indignant at this twofold outrage, against their authority and their servant, the gentlemen of the court once more held a council together, but the alderman went up to Zedekiah with a sorrowful face and an unsteady step. "What was the name of this man?" he said.

A fearful presentiment passed through the mind of the informer, and he would have given ever so much to recall what he had said. Seeing his hesitation the old covenanter cried out in a voice full of anguish—"Speak out, for I read the truth in your face."

"My worthy Mr. Alderman," said Zedekiah, "the brave soldier whom I was so unlucky as to misunderstand, is a gallant warrior, and held in high esteem by his general."

“His name ?” urged the alderman ; “I want to know his name.”

“I do not know it, but I rather suspect that this precious vessel is called George, or Jürgen Joyce.”

“I knew it,” groaned the unhappy man ; “it is my own misguided son,” and he covered his face with his hands. His colleagues gathered round him, but he refused all the consolation they offered. “I have not seen him for five years,” said he, “and now I hear he is amongst the soldiers. Would he were dead rather ! Yet I am his father ; he is my own flesh and blood. Oh, my God ! wherefore hast Thou done this !”

“My friend,” said the lord president, “I believe that the wonderful mercy of God will restore this prodigal son to you. This sinful maiden will be delivered up to us by your son, in spite of his superiors having pledged themselves to protect her. In our robes of office, and invested with the insignia of our dignity, we will go to the camp to-morrow, and claim the renegade, whom you must receive in the arms of forgiveness, and the girl, in order that she may be given over to the course of justice.”

At this moment, one of the gentlemen, who, amidst all that had passed, had never forgotten the London despatches, now drew the attention of the president to the fact, and that he had never received them ; upon which the latter turned to Zedekiah, who instantly felt in his pocket, but to his dismay the packet was gone.

"The villain !" he cried, and with this one word he demolished the brilliant fabric he had erected in honour of Jürgen. Shame at being outwitted mingled with vexation at not being able to throw the blame upon any one else, he became bewildered, and his masters, instead of coming to his assistance, complained loudly of his gross carelessness in having taken the despatches into a public-house, instead of bringing them straight to their destination. They were expecting news of the highest importance, said the president, almost beside himself with anger, and the loss was irreparable. Unless the documents were forthwith furnished, he should be turned out of his office.

Zedekiah's humility was exchanged for a stubborn defiance, and no one could have foreseen how the scene would have ended, had not

the door been thrown open, and Frank Herbert, in full uniform with his waving plume, entered the room. All was suddenly silent.

"My lord president," said the colonel, going up to the table, "through one of my cornets, I have come into possession of a document which bears the address of the reverend gentleman to whom I have the honour of speaking. The seal is that of a man who has succeeded, with the aid of a powerful faction, in holding the Parliament 'in terrorem.' The writer of this document is Denzil Hollis, and I presume the contents are of a highly treasonable nature."

"Denzil Hollis is a man of honour, and—"

"I am not alluding to his private character; but he is the head of that party in Parliament, which has plotted against the safety of our general."

"Do you call a loyal act of Parliament plotting?"

"I call it a conspiracy when a party is formed, which, in order to get rid of the army, and rob it of its leader, devises a warrant against another member of Parliament, against the one in fact who stands at the head of the army."

"Cromwell is a traitor!" thundered the president; "he has broken the covenant he solemnly swore to keep."

"That is not the question now, I am referring to this letter," replied Frank Herbert, and he drew the document from his pocket, which had been abstracted from that of Zedekiah by Jürgen.

"Give me the document," cried the president; "it belongs to me."

"There is no doubt of that," replied Frank. "I might have opened it myself, and saved you the trouble, but I disdained to gain the information in that underhand way; but as I am convinced that it contains news important for the army, I demand as a soldier that you open the letter in my presence, and read its contents aloud."

"Never!" cried all the Covenanters as with one voice.

Frank Herbert turned half round, and cried in a loud voice: "Ten soldiers come forward," and immediately ten dragoons entered, whilst through the open folding-doors it could be seen that the passages and stairs were thronged with pikes, helmets, and bayonets.

"I protest against this treatment," said

the president, "and decline receiving the letter under such conditions."

"Then the secretary will be so obliging as to do so," replied the colonel; and at his command the ten dragoons with drawn swords surrounded the unfortunate secretary, who broke the seal with trembling hands, and read as follows :—

"MY LORD, and my beloved brother
in the Lord.

"A most unheard-of thing has happened. It had been determined in our committee that when Cromwell entered the House of Commons the following day, he should be arrested and sent to the Tower; as we are of opinion that if his person were separated from the army, it would be easy to reduce the latter to its former subjection. This intention of seizing Cromwell's person cannot be carried out, as we have just received the intelligence that he has been seen outside the City, on horseback, accompanied only by a servant, and that he is on his way to join the army. . . . "

A flash of triumph lighted up Herbert's

manly face: there was a pause, and then, at the bidding of the colonel, the secretary resumed the reading.

"And now, beloved brother, do your best to secure the guilty man before he can reach the camp. Set a price on his head, summon our brethren, and let the alarm-bell be sounded."

"Enough," said Frank Herbert. "I have heard as much as is necessary for me to know. My lord president, and you, gentlemen of the court, will consider yourselves bail to me for the safety of the general. I leave a dozen of my soldiers in the house. You are my prisoners," and with a slight wave of the hand, he took his leave of the amazed assembly.

As the colonel and Dr. Hewitt turned into the street, all was life and bustle, for the news that Cromwell had escaped the trap set by his enemies, had spread like wild-fire. A horseman had just passed through the town on his way to the camp, with the intelligence that Cromwell had been in his own house at Ely for some few hours.

"Then my hour is come," said the ex-vicar to his friend, "and come, as I had fore-

seen, at the time of my visitation, for you know, Frank, I have now no home, and they have taken my church from me."

"I know it," said Frank, and he grasped his friend's hand with an expression of deep sympathy; "but, John, when you say your time is come, what do you purpose doing?"

"To ride to Ely, and speak with Cromwell. A voice from within tells me this is the time for Royalty and the Church to conclude an alliance with the army."

"I warn you against any such alliance," said Frank, impressively; "it can never be honourably meant. Leave it alone, John; you know not what you are doing. You would entirely ruin that which you are seeking to save."

"You speak as the soldier, Frank."

"I express the feeling of the army; and even if Cromwell wished such an alliance, it is out of his power."

"Frank, you who behaved so honourably about that closed letter, and disdained any under-hand dealing, put it to your conscience if violence and compulsion are not almost as bad. Remember, that though in one hand

you had the unopened letter, in the other you held the sword."

"In my eyes, the power we have bought with our blood has something sacred in it. It is like every other weapon, the metal of which is ennobled by the wearer. It is a criminal instrument in the hands of the tyrant, who abuses it to enslave minds, and to wage war against thought ; but it becomes a flaming sword, illumined by a thousand halos, directly it is dedicated to the service of freedom."

Frank spoke excitedly, and the doctor felt, as he had on previous occasions, that it was more and more difficult for him to agree with his friend. He began to see that as regarded his cherished plan, he must act without his assistance, and perhaps in opposition to him.

It was with a cordial grasp of the hand, however, that Frank said : " You must let my opinions remain as free as my soldier's sash, for my arm and sword obey one master only—conviction."

They had now reached the inn almost at the end of the town, where the doctor's horse had been put up. The afternoon was far advanced when the two friends parted, and as

the faithful friend of his school-days disappeared between the green hedges, it seemed to Frank as if a dream of his youth had departed. The image of Olivia rose before the eyes of the brave soldier, and a sigh escaped from his breast. As he turned away, he said to himself: "I wonder if John knows that Elizabeth Cromwell has been for some months the wife of Claypole?"

CHAPTER XVI.

CROMWELL'S HOUSE AT ELY.

THE moon stood high in the heavens, as Dr. Hewitt rode through the little street leading up to the hill of Ely, and the massive towers and pinnacles of the ancient cathedral stood out in strong relief in the splendour of its silvery light. All was silence and desolation around, for the extensive buildings, boasting so much beauty of mediæval architecture, that surrounded the minster, were now deserted.

As the doctor turned to the left, the bishop's palace rose before him, and the first signs of man's proximity were perceptible; a dull murmur of many voices, the restless pawing of horses, and the rattling of iron chains. The doctor tied his horse to the brass knocker of a side-door of the palace, where he had

often been a welcome guest. That was all past now, for the bishop was no longer in his house.

The doctor was not permitted to indulge long in sad reflections, for a rough voice called out to him, and he had to step forward, in answer to the challenge from the sentinel, and give an account of himself, and the object of his journey. Unconsciously he had entered the precincts of the army, where martial law prevailed. The soldier raised difficulties, saying that he did not know the name, or whether he ought to let him pass.

"But I know him," said another soldier, emerging from a group, encamped in the palace, "I know that he is a friend of my colonel, the Honourable Mr. Frank Herbert, and I am convinced that no bad purpose has brought him hither."

With these words the soldier stepped forward a few paces, and the moon fell upon the pale face of young Lockyer, who looked more ghastly than ever beneath his black helmet.

"You are the vicar of Childerley," added he, extending his rough soldier's hand; "a learned gentleman, and a God-fearing man, as I have heard, though in a different

fashion to my own. Come with me, and I will lead you to the captain, who is commanding here. You do not know me," he continued, observing the doctor's surprise, "but I saw you once standing under the porch of the church of Childerley, and I remember with what pleasure my colonel greeted you, which was a good sign to me."

"My good fellow," said the doctor, who now recollected the millenarian, "I must not deceive you. At that time I was the vicar of Childerley, but I am so no longer. I have been dismissed from my office this morning."

"I congratulate you," said the Fifth-Monarchy man. "The day is approaching when judgment will be held. I have already seen the signs. A brief space only, and then the sacred year will come about which it is written in the Prophet Daniel. This is a blessed day, for not only has our general been preserved to us, and the intentions of his enemies frustrated, but the Jews have once more trodden on English soil, and the promise is fulfilled. A band of these holy men, and devout women, entered our camp this morning, and with them a maiden beautiful as an angel, commissioned by the

heavenly hosts to lead us to the Promised Land."

Lockyer now led the way through the cathedral, the despoiled condition of which filled the doctor's soul with deep melancholy. The stained glass, that had once adorned the windows, was now lying shivered to atoms on the ground; the tastefully inlaid marble pavement had been ruthlessly torn up; the beautiful ceiling of blue and gold had been blackened with the smoke, and the statues of the old saints, kings, and archbishops, had had their heads broken off. The honest soldier, fanatic as he was, noticed the sorrow of the man he was escorting.

"Do not grieve about it," said he. "What is there in a sanctuary of stone and brass? Has not the Lord said—'The whole world is my sanctuary, and each of you is my priest.' But look, we are not doing anything to add to your pain; we do not turn your chancel into a stable, nor use your altar-cloths for our horses' backs: we would rather sleep out in the open air, than wound those who have already been grieved enough."

Herewith Lockyer opened the northern gate, and the palace-green, which separated

the cathedral from the palace, lay before them. Heaps of rubbish covered the now waste place, large fires were burning in its midst, horses were tied up here and there, and soldiers were encamped all round.

Lockyer conducted his companion to the captain, who, upon hearing that Dr. Hewitt wished to speak with Cromwell, asked for his credentials, as it was very difficult, he said, to obtain an interview without them. The doctor mentioned his friend, Colonel Herbert, and added with a smile, that the general would probably receive him when he heard his name.

Upon this the captain offered to go with him, and after the doctor had given his horse into the charge of Lockyer, they walked across the green and past a church, to the extreme end of the town, where they stopped before a straggling building. In this house dwelt Cromwell.

There it stands now, very little altered from what it then was, with its strong walls, its irregular stories, its large chimneys, broad windows, dark narrow corridors, and low rooms. Extensive stabling and out-houses filled up the courtyard. The massive stone

walls have set time at defiance, and the oak wainscoting is in excellent preservation. The house, although since then it has passed through so many hands, still retains the air of respectable solidity that rested upon it in Cromwell's time.

The doctor remained outside to await the return of the captain. The house and the adjacent buildings were casting broad shadows; the windows on the ground-floor alone were brightly lighted from within, and the sound of a sweet and solemn hymn stole upon the ear; it was a chorus in which the voices of men and women were mingled and set to the verse—"See what a good and joyful thing it is, brethren, to dwell together in unity."

The doctor recognised one woman's voice; it was a soft and melodious voice, rich and clear, and carried his whole soul heavenwards. To hear it again after so long a time, affected him more deeply than he could have imagined. He had not heard it since it rang joyfully over the meadows of St. Ives. At the concluding words of the chorus—"For there the Lord promised His blessing and life for evermore"—"for evermore" resounded

through the vault of heaven, and then followed a prolonged "Amen."

"Amen," whispered the doctor, as the captain stepped out and announced that he was welcome.

Through a multitude of soldiers in varied uniforms, ranged on either side of the room, the doctor passed up at once to Cromwell, who had not been informed of his arrival till the conclusion of the singing. The general received him with unaffected cordiality, for he had always greatly esteemed the vicar, and the other members of the family hastened to welcome one whom they had known so well at St. Ives.

"Betty," said the general, "you will surely not be the last to welcome your old master."

"Certainly not, father, but I thought that I should have been the *first* to whom he would have turned."

"My worldly child!" said Cromwell playfully, as he pressed the slender form to him.

"Good evening, my dear friend," she said, when she had disengaged herself from her father's embrace.

The words were uttered in the same melodious voice, that the doctor had so clearly distinguished in the hymn. She gave him

her hand, and for the first time since he had parted from the half-grown girl at St. Ives, they stood face to face. She, Elizabeth, the daughter of Cromwell, and he, the servant of the proscribed Church, the loyal subject of the imprisoned King. His eyes beamed with an indescribable tenderness, as he thus looked upon her ; and in her own was a tear, too sacred for us to enquire into its cause. She had the blue eyes of her father, but instead of his severe expression, hers were soft and bright ; indeed, she was the image of Cromwell, though the innate greatness, which marked the ruler in him, gave place in her to the devoted, self-sacrificing woman. She was Cromwell's favourite daughter, though he early recognised in her a touch of what he called worldliness, but which we should rather term feminine attractiveness.

Her next inquiry was for Olivia of Childerley, but her father reproved her.

"Betty," said he, "you are forgetting to introduce the doctor to Claypole."

A crimson tinge dyed the cheeks of the fair woman. "Forgive me," she said, turning to a young officer who stood near her, "for having thought of my friend before my husband."

If any one in this large assembly had been paying attention to trifles, he might have noticed the sudden pallor of the doctor. His lips grew white, as he murmured intelligibly only to his God, "I thank Thee, that this also is past, Thou hast not wished to lead me any more into temptation, I thank Thee."

Richard Cromwell now approached and shook the hand of the doctor in his usual jovial manner, and whilst he was making some droll remark, Elizabeth turned away.

Obedient to the wishes of her father, she had lately become the wife of the handsome and amiable Claypole, but if for a moment she hesitated in the depths of her heart to pronounce the word "Yes," it is not for us to raise the veil.

Elizabeth's elder sister Bridget, who had shortly before been married to General Ireton, was also there, and although less loveable than her sister, she was considered by her father to be more earnest and zealous in religion.

Henry, Cromwell's second son, was of a quiet deep nature, with a head full of schemes, waiting in the background till the events arose which called him forth and proved to the world that he was his father's own son. The

two little ones, Mary and Francisca, at that time respectively eleven and nine years old, were clinging to their mother, a tall lady of more than forty years.

"These are my two little women-folk," said Cromwell, roughly caressing the little creatures. It was with the greatest respect that he turned towards his mother, who was now an aged lady of more than eighty. As she sat there in her antique ruff, and hoop-petticoat, with the silk over-skirt, she looked as vigorous and cheerful as she had done years ago as a girl. She had been born under this roof, and had returned to it when her son Oliver had moved thither with his family. Happiness beamed in her still beautiful face, and the fame of her son lent it additional brightness.

"Mother," said he, "here is news from Childerley."

The old lady was deeply attached to her great-niece Olivia, who was said to resemble her, and she joyfully welcomed the vicar, who could give her tidings of the dear girl.

"I am grieved," said Cromwell to his guest, "that you should have come to me at such a

time of confusion, for in a few hours I must leave here for the camp at Cambridge."

"Where you are anxiously expected, your Excellency. If you will allow me to accompany you, I can speak to you on the way of the subject that brought me here, and then I need not rob you of your precious moments here."

Cromwell replied, that no minutes were too precious when the welfare of a fellow-creature was concerned.

"Not my welfare," replied the doctor, "but that of the people."

"Then it becomes more than ever my duty to listen forthwith, for the miseries of war are weighing so heavily on the poor of this nation that they claim instant attention."

"What! you are seriously disposed for peace! Ah, I knew it, I knew it must be so!"

"We intend to put an end to the business of war," replied Cromwell in a grave tone, "and we are hastening, with the assistance of God and by His grace, to the conclusion of our work, like a labourer longing for rest. I can assure you it is my wish to see the people happy, as they once were."

“And are you disposed to show toleration to those who have hitherto been so hostile to you, both in Church and State?”

“Not toleration only, but liberty, liberty for all. In matters of belief let every man be his own judge, and in politics let us defer to the united voice of the people. No state religion, but a religious state, in which ecclesiastics are the helpers not the masters over God's people. I consider it an unrighteous as well as an injudicious policy to rob any one of his natural freedom on the suspicion that he will abuse it; it is like proscribing wine throughout a country for fear men should get drunk.”

The doctor thought the favourable moment had come to give utterance to his long-cherished purpose; nevertheless he trembled as he spoke to Cromwell about his having an interview with the King.

Cromwell listened to him quietly without moving a feature of his face. “You have acquaintances in the opposite camp; you must know how matters stand,” was all he said.

The doctor then related what he knew, how that the King was miserably oppressed by the compulsion put upon his conscience by his narrow-minded warders, who forced upon him

Presbyterian ministers, whilst they refused him the ministrations of his own chaplains. He added that the King was longing to be in the midst of the army.

In silence and with apparent indifference, Cromwell had followed the doctor's report, but when he came to the words, "that the King was longing to be with the army," his eyes gleamed like those of a lion; it was an electric flash like lightning, and as short; then his face resumed its fixed, immovable expression. He said nothing, but hummed a few bars of some melody, and, rubbing his hands, asked the doctor whether he would not take some refreshment, and, before an answer could be given, he had already called to his wife to provide some.

How was the doctor to understand such conduct? It was in vain his penetrating eye tried to read in the face the mind of Cromwell.

Towards midnight, the signal for departure was given. Every man mounted his horse, and the whole troop were waiting outside. Cromwell, however, after he had taken an affectionate leave of his family, returned once more to his mother, and bent before her as he

said, "Mother, pray for me, that I may walk worthy of the Lord in all to which He has called me."

And the old lady laid both her hands on him as though invoking a blessing on the head of her son.

CHAPTER XVII.

CORNET JOYCE IS ON THE ROAD TO EARN A
NAME IN HISTORY.

EARLY the next morning, they halted on a rising of the highroad, whence an extensive view could be obtained of the plain below. As far as the eye could reach, it was covered with white tents, between which fires were still burning. Church towers, visible at different points of the horizon, marked the limits, within which the army lay enchained, a giant prisoner, the rattling of whose iron fetters could be heard at a great distance. Yet the man was near who could restore full freedom to its movements.

Fairfax, already uncertain as to the course events might take, hesitated as to whether he should stop short, or proceed with caution. Lady Fairfax, who exercised a strong

influence over her husband, was a staunch Presbyterian, and stood on the side of the threatened Parliament, so that Fairfax, though nominally commander-in-chief, lingered irresolute at the head of the army. His little daughter, Mary, now a year or two older, no longer remained with her father in the camp, but lived in London with her mother, and received instruction from the well-known poet and scholar, Andrew Marvel.

Long did Cromwell's eye rest upon the countless tents spread out at his feet; he seemed to be surveying the power concentrated there, and to be inwardly calculating the depths of his own strength. Suddenly he perceived signs of life in the apparently dead mass; even at that distance, horses could be seen on the move, and it was evident that a squadron was being formed.

"There they are," said Cromwell, who had been looking through a telescope, and now turned to Ireton: "I recognise the cornet, he seems to have understood me."

"He is a sharp fellow," was Ireton's answer.

"And an honest one, whatever his other sins may be," said Henry Cromwell. "I

remarked him on the battle-field of Naseby ; he was sincere, father, when he dedicated to you the life you had saved."

"Not I, but God, perhaps, to make him an instrument on this occasion ; for every man has his day."

"I know he is a man to be depended upon," cried Richard Cromwell, "in any matter that requires skill and address ; he is never at a loss under any circumstances. Why, he has been everything in his day, even a tailor, I believe, like his father."

"I hope you will never reproach either him or his father with their trade," replied Cromwell, severely ; "the old man has done much for the good cause in his time, and I only hope that his conduct may be such that we need never forget our obligations to him."

"If you are speaking of Alderman Joyce," said Dr. Hewitt, now joining in the conversation, "you do not seem to know that he, and the other members of the London Ecclesiastical Commission, have been arrested by Frank Herbert, in consequence of a despatch from Denzil Hollis, which had been seized by Cornet Joyce, the son of the alderman, and by him given up to the colonel."

Cromwell was evidently concerned at this communication, and for a moment was silent, as if struggling with himself.

“Denzil Hollis,” he cried, at last, “the head of the Presbyterian party! That is a different matter; yet I will spare no pains to give the best turn possible to the affair. I am sorry for the old man, Joyce, and I should like, if it were possible, in remembrance of our old acquaintance, to reconcile the father and son to each other; but these Presbyterian heads are hard. I can but try the experiment, and should it fail, the son will have to choose for himself. Three things are requisite for a soldier in my army—courage, self-denial, and—”

“Ambition?” cried Henry Cromwell, with a beaming face.

An angry look of rebuke fell upon him from his father. “And the fear of God,” he said, in a voice which made all hearts tremble. “Now, gentlemen, forward! we are expected in the camp.”

They rode on, and before long a loud hurrah proclaimed that Cromwell was amongst his soldiers.

After passing slowly through the rows of

tents, responding graciously to each joyful salute, and stopping to speak a word of encouragement or praise, he approached the outposts, where the squadron he had descried from the road was assembled. His eye fell upon a group of foreign-looking men, and an elderly man stepped forward, and casting his eyes up to Heaven, said :

"Praised be Thou, Eternal One, King of the world, who hast given of Thy glory to him who is flesh and blood !"

Cromwell looked inquiringly at the venerable man with the white beard.

Abraham, who from long habit was master of the English language, now bowed before him and said :

"Great man, I am a Jew, and my religion requires me to utter this thanksgiving at the sight of a great man of this world, or of a king."

The last words affected Cromwell visibly ; his lips were firmly compressed, and the hand which held the reins trembled violently.

The general was now informed that this was the transport of prisoners which had been brought into the camp the day before.

"The prisoners from Bristol !" said Crom-

well, as his keen eye glanced over the troop of foreigners, whose pleading faces, full of fear and expectation, were turned towards him. He was particularly struck by one youth, whose eye, sparkling with fiery enthusiasm, rested on him in ecstasy.

"Who are you?" said Cromwell, turning towards him.

"Isaac de Castro," was the answer, "a Portuguese nobleman, a Jew whom the God of his fathers has blessed, in that He has shown him the man for whom we have waited. Thou art the man who will accomplish great things for Israel, therefore bow down before him, ye sons and daughters of Judah!"

The host of foreigners immediately fell on their knees, and stretched out their arms to the general, who moved uneasily in his saddle; for, as he gazed upon these dark eastern faces, all the wonders of the Holy City, in which his Saviour had wandered while on earth, spread themselves out dreamily before him.

"Mercy!" cried Lockyer, stepping forward, and seizing the hand of the general. "Mercy! for the messengers of the millennium!"

Cromwell was but little inclined to the

doctrine of the millennium, for although he adhered to the words of Scripture, he took them, in this case, only in a spiritual sense. He was, however, indulgent even to the errors of sects, as long as they did not overstep the bounds, which the most liberal policy must draw for the sake of self-preservation. Gently, therefore, Cromwell disengaged his hand from that of the fanatical soldier, and listened quietly, as the latter continued :

"The word of God will be fulfilled, as soon as the 'dispersion' of His people has been accomplished over the face of the earth, and behold ! after hundreds of years, they tread once more the soil of England. Remember what the 68th Psalm says."

"The 68th Psalm is indeed a glorious prophecy," replied Cromwell, "though I am of opinion that it refers to the Church of the Gospel ; it may, however, point to the Jews."

Cromwell loved the dark mystical language of the Bible, particularly of the Old Testament, the warlike spirit of which corresponded with his own. He undertook nothing without first seeking his God, whose answers he found written in the Old Testament. He would shut himself up in a room to fast and pray. The

fervour of his devotions to obtain a Scriptural answer would wring floods of tears from him, till, almost overcome by his emotion, he would open a Bible, and the place upon which his eye first fell gave the decision to which he resolutely adhered.

“Stand up!” he cried: “I will listen to a statement of your case, and then give my opinion.”

Hereupon he dismounted from his horse, and throwing the reins to the groom, stepped forward to listen.

Abraham of the Green Shield was chosen speaker, as he was the one most thoroughly acquainted with the state of the country, and with the language. He related simply the history of all the prisoners, and whilst concealing nothing which might be to their disadvantage in the eyes of the general, mentioned everything that could be offered in excuse.

Cromwell listened without once interrupting him, and looked with kindness upon the face furrowed with so many sorrows, and upon the prematurely hoary head of the worthy man. His statement bore the stamp of truth and good sense, but before Cromwell

could give any answer, his attention was turned to another part of the camp.

The Presbyterian members of the Ecclesiastical Commission, who had been arrested the day before in the Town Hall, had just arrived to hear their ultimate fate from Cromwell. They were surrounded by a mounted guard, at the head of which appeared Colonel Herbert. The general was advancing to meet his former friends, from whom, alas! a deadly strife now separated him, when a piercing shriek was heard. It was a woman's voice, and at the same time a cry of anguish arose from a multitude of people: "The name of the Almighty defend us!" The eyes of all were immediately turned in the direction whence the words proceeded.

"It is Manuella," whispered the doctor to his friend, to whom he had hastened immediately on his arrival.

This was sufficient for Frank, who interested himself in the girl, as being Olivia's friend. Leaving his horse, he endeavoured to make his way through the crowd which had gathered round Manuella, who had sunk on the ground. When the troop of horsemen was seen approaching, a singular feeling had come over

her, as if she were about to meet one who in some way or other would exercise an influence over her destiny. Her heart became oppressed, and she almost feared her senses were leaving her. She kept her eye fixed upon the horseman who appeared to be the leader, and as he gradually drew near, she recognised him ; her heart had not been deceived. It was Frank Herbert, and with a cry she fell on the ground. As she slowly recovered consciousness, she saw Isaac's dark face bent over her.

"Again !" he cried in a voice of vehement rebuke, "you would drive away the brightness of God, that is already settling on us ?"

Her second look encountered that of Frank Herbert, and that restored her to life. If the brightness of God had indeed settled on this host, it was concentrated alone in her face ; but it soon gave way to a melancholy expression, as she endeavoured to raise herself.

"Do not be afraid of me," said Frank Herbert, in a voice full of sympathy ; "the young lady of Childerley House begged me to watch over your fate."

Manuella trembled as she heard his voice, and hastily bent her eyes to the ground, as

though she had been guilty in raising them to his.

"What can I do for you?" inquired Frank Herbert.

The long restrained sob burst from her breast as she extended her hands to him, holding the scarf with which he had saved her from death.

"Who is she?" asked Cromwell, who was present at the scene.

"Verily, I know her," said a voice, which struck upon the ear like a discord: "she is the very girl for whom we are in search, who came into this country for criminal purposes, disguised as a page—the outcast of a foreign land, a venal minister to princely lusts, the paramour of the Duke of Buckingham."

Manuella's eyes flashed fire, her lips moved, but no sound came forth from the intensity of her indignation, but an avenging hand was near.

"Villain!" thundered Jürgen, as he felled him to the ground. "I would tread you under foot like a poisonous serpent;"—it was Zedekiah Pickerling.

But now a murmur arose amongst Manuella's own people, and terror was visible on their

faces, as looking fixedly at Manuella, they said to each other in an under-tone—

“It surely can’t be——”

Manuella heard them, however, and recovering her composure, turned towards them, and said in a low, but clear voice—

“Yes, I am Manuella d’Acosta.”

“Accursed one! accursed one!” shrieked the Portuguese Jews, drawing away from her with every sign of contempt and fear.

Matters were in this position when an old man came forward who had seen Cornet Joyce strike down the hypocritical Zedekiah.

“Alas! alas!” he cried, “that we should thus meet again!”

The cornet turned pale, as he heard the trembling voice of his father, and with the exclamation—“My father!” he threw himself at his feet. It was the first time they had met for six long years, and now, instead of the alderman appearing before his prodigal son in his robes of office, he was as a helpless prisoner in the hands of Cromwell. He would have turned away from this incorrigible son, but his affection was stronger than his will.

“Dedicate the remainder of your life to the cause of the Lord,” said he, as his withered

hand was grasped by Jürgen ; "and thus help me to forget all I have suffered for your sake."

"How can I do that, my father?"

"Cast off the uniform you are wearing."

"That is impossible."

"Renounce the banner you are following."

"I have sworn allegiance to it."

"The oath sworn to a traitor is not binding."

Until now Cromwell had been silent, but at this point he turned to the alderman, and said mildly,—

"You are excited, and so I will overlook the inconsiderate expression you have just used ; but for the sake of our old friendship I beg you to control yourself."

"Friendship !" cried the old man, wrathfully ; "friendship with you, Oliver Cromwell ! It was by hypocrisy that you first ensnared us, and by cunning and violence that you have succeeded in setting us aside. All your friends will fall off from you when they see how you have deceived them, and curse the hour when they gave credence to your words ! But your time will come ; and when the life which has been rendered miserable through constant fear of the secret dagger, ball, or

poison, has been brought to an end, your name will represent all that is hateful and detestable. Just as you think nothing of separating a son from his father, so you would sever the people from their King, to whom they are longing to hold out their hands for peace ; and they *will* be reconciled in time, and both accuse you before the throne of God ! This is what I had to say to you ; and now, Oliver Cromwell, you may send me to the Tower."

"Not to the Tower," said Cromwell, whose face had become fiery red, but whose voice retained its even tones, "I would rather give you and some of your friends time for reflection by sending you into exile for a few years. As concerns myself, I know that God will justify me in His own good time."

At a sign from him, the alderman and the other members of the synod were led off to a neighbouring tent, and Zedekiah, who had risen slowly, followed them.

The general now turned to Manuella, as calmly as if nothing had happened to wound him most deeply. She was standing all alone, for her fellow-believers had deserted her now they heard who she was, and even Frank

Herbert found it difficult to overcome the impression created by the words "Buckingham's paramour." The only one who stood true to her was the cornet.

"General," said he, "I was passive when I saw my old father led past me, though my heart was wrung, for the life he had given me had been pledged to you. But what has this girl done?"

Manuella now raised her eyes, and fixing them firmly on Frank, said "I am innocent."

She seemed to speak to him alone, as though she cared only for his condemnation. The young soldier felt strangely moved as her dark eyes rested on him. "She was Olivia's friend," he murmured.

The vicar here begged permission to relate all he knew of Manuella, and Cromwell assented, and listened in silence. At the conclusion he remarked :

"She seems to have been guilty of folly and indiscretion, but of nothing that would justify our interference. To whom can you appeal in your own home to strengthen me in my conviction that you have spoken the truth?" he said, turning to Manuella.

"To the Rabbi Manasseh ben Israel," she

instantly replied. "He was my instructor."

"I have often heard his name," said the general, after a moment's reflection; "he is said to be a pious man, a great scribe, and a famous doctor. In appealing to your master, you appeal to a good witness; you shall have justice done you."

"She is under the ban of the synagogue!" cried Isaac.

"She is accursed!" cried the Portuguese.

Abraham alone stepped forward, and took Manuella's hand.

"I have known you but a few days, my child, but my experienced eye has watched you closely, and since you have been thrust out by the community, before they have heard you even, you shall come with me, to the home the Almighty may still allow me to have; my wife shall be your mother, and I will be your father until your own receives you once more."

Manuella threw herself weeping into his arms.

"You have acted like a just man," said Cromwell, who had watched the proceedings attentively, "and the root of *your* religion, I

see, is love. The prejudice of centuries, and the blind hatred which has persecuted you, must soon cease, and obloquy be wiped off your name; a home will be vouchsafed to you amongst strange people, and you will be allowed to rebuild your temple to the Lord. That will be your Promised Land; the new Jerusalem is everywhere,—wherever the believer has sought and found the Lord. But after what you have but now witnessed of your people, do you think them ripe for this change? I tell you, no!"

Upon this he entered his tent to issue various orders, and when he again appeared, he held several passes in his hand. One was for the Portuguese Jews, and directed that they should be sent to Holland by the next vessel leaving London; the second was for Isaac de Castro, who was to be allowed to continue his journey to South America from London or any sea-port of the kingdom. The third was for Abraham, his family, and Manuella, and stated that the house in the city was to be given up to Abraham again, and that the city magistrates were to protect him in his occupation of it.

Before all concerned had time to express

their joy and gratitude, the general had already turned to his staff, "And now to the business of the day," he cried.

"Farewell, Manuella," said the cornet : "you are going away from me, and you will forget me."

"No, never," said Manuella, "you have been so good to me."

Frank Herbert, who had stood irresolute, now came up to her. "You have suffered much," said he, "may this be the beginning of better times for you," and with a farewell pressure of the hand he was gone.

Flinging aside the scarf she had so long kept as a sacred relic, she staggered back, and hid her face sobbing on Abraham's shoulder.

Cromwell meanwhile had drawn the vicar aside. "You see that squadron," said he, pointing to a troop of about a thousand men strong, commanded by Cornet Joyce, "you see how they have disappeared amidst the clouds of dust. In like manner may a cloud rest over our actions to those who are not acquainted with the reasons ; but just as these horsemen will arrive at their destination and emerge from the clouds of dust, so, we doubt not, that God will eventually make clear the

sincerity of our purposes. Journey home, and may God be with you! He may perhaps accomplish your cherished wish. Remember me to my cousin of Childerley, and tell him that, God willing, he may prepare himself for a day after his own heart. My love to my dear Olivia, whose happiness lies as near my heart as that of my own daughters'. Farewell!" And mounting his horse he galloped across the heath surrounded by his staff.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE LOVERS.

A FEW days after the return of Dr. Hewitt to Childerley, the astounding news ran through the country that the King had been carried off by a troop of dragoons from the castle of Holmby, with the Parliamentary Commission of Peers and Commons which had formed his guard, and was on his way to the army. The extraordinary part of the affair was that the abduction had been accomplished by a simple cornet, and no name was now more talked about throughout Europe than that of Cornet Joyce.

The seizure happened thus. The King, who had spent the best part of a year at the stately castle of Holmby, was accustomed from time to time to make excursions to the various noblemen's seats in the neighbourhood for the

purpose of playing bowls, there being no well-kept bowling-green at Holmby. One afternoon his Majesty was at Althorpe, the seat of Lord Spencer, enjoying this recreation, when strange uniforms were discerned, and bearded faces seen peering through the park-palings. They were supposed to be soldiers belonging to Whalley's regiment, and Whalley being one of Cromwell's officers, no further notice was taken. Not long afterwards the news came from Holmby that a considerable troop of horsemen, numbering one or it might be two thousand men, had been seen in the distance, and that their destination was undoubtedly Holmby Castle. The King, who had hitherto been silent, left the green and gave orders for the return to Holmby. Scarcely had they arrived there, when the Commissioners of the Parliament held a consultation with the governor of the castle. They were in the greatest anxiety, for they had received secret instructions to secure the person of the King, to carry him to London, and place him under the custody of the Parliament, before any diversion could be made by the army. For some few weeks past overtures had been made to the King on the

part of the army, and terms proposed which were much more reasonable and acceptable than those of the Parliament. The messages had been carried to and fro under great difficulties, as the Presbyterians thought nothing of searching suspected pockets. This time, however, they either had not searched in the right pocket, or there was nothing to be seized.

That night the watch at Holmby Castle was doubled by order of the governor, the men were duly acquainted with the threatened danger, and a promise was exacted from them to allow of no attempt upon the person of his Majesty.

It was midnight. Suddenly the tramping of many horses was heard; then the word of command, Halt! and soon after all the entrances to the broad avenue were occupied by soldiers, whilst the leader dismounted and knocked at the castle-gate.

"Who's there?" cried the sentinel.

"Good friend," was the answer, "open the door."

The governor of the castle appeared. "Who is the leader of this troop?" he asked.

"Cornet Joyce, at your service."

"Joyce! I have never heard the name. What is your business here?"

"To speak with the King."

"Upon whose authority?"

"Upon my own."

The governor, highly indignant, peremptorily ordered him to withdraw his troops, and recommended him to communicate his wishes to the Parliamentary Commission the next morning.

"Do you think I have come here to receive orders from you?" cried the cornet. "I have nothing whatever to do with the Commissioners. My message is to the King, and to the King I must and will speak instantly."

In the meanwhile the little garrison had found many acquaintances amongst Jürgen's troop, and before long they had fraternized. All their promises were forgotten, and at the instigation of the cornet, who was a man after their own heart, they threw the gates open with a loud hurrah! and cordially greeted their companions-in-arms.

Directly the governor saw the course events were taking, he escaped from the castle, and rode as fast as his horse would carry him to

London, to communicate the failure of their plans to Denzil Hollis.

Cornet Joyce lost no time ; but ordering his men to occupy the staircase, and guard the doors of the Commissioners' rooms, mounted to the apartments of his Majesty.

"The King is asleep !" cried Charles' trusty follower, Herbert, who stood trembling on the top step ; "recollect, the King is asleep !"

"To be sure—to be sure," said the cornet, who had, however, made noise enough with his boots and spurs to disturb even the sleep of the righteous. He halted a moment, for this was the first time he had spoken to a King, but the next instant he knocked with both his fists at the door of his Majesty's chamber. A voice from within demanded who it was that had come at that unseasonable hour to disturb the King.

Whilst the cornet was parleying with the guards on duty a silver bell was heard to ring.

"His Majesty !" cried the attendants, hurrying into the apartment.

Curious to relate, the King desired to see the rough cornet who had caused such disturbance in the castle, and to the astonish-

ment of his attendants was not at all offended at the behaviour of the intruder. Moreover, he held a long conversation with him, though in an under-tone ; and when after some little time he dismissed the cornet, he was heard to say—

“ Well, to-morrow morning, early, Mr. Joyce, I shall be ready to go with you, if your soldiers confirm what you have promised.”

And thus it had come about.

The next morning the King appeared at his windows, and was received with loud acclamations by the soldiers. Towards the afternoon the procession set out ; the King with his attendants in one coach, the Commissioners in another, whilst Jürgen and his troops escorted them. The country-people flocked to welcome the King as he passed through the villages, raising their children high up in their arms, and the King graciously acknowledged their salutes. The crowds grew greater and more enthusiastic as the procession advanced ; flowers were thrown into the carriage, and roses strewn before the horses.

The first evening they halted at Hinchinbrook Castle, in Huntingdonshire, where the

noble proprietor, Lord Montague, received his royal master. The house had formerly belonged to Sir Oliver Cromwell, the uncle of the general, and the Cromwell arms and crests were still to be seen in the ancient hall windows. The sight of these caused the King the first pang he had felt during this happy day.

Messengers were now despatched to Childerley House, as on the following day the King intended to pass the night at the castle of the loyal Cavalier, Sir Tobias Cutts. The notice of the royal visit found the inhabitants actively employed in preparations, as the report had long preceded it. The old rooms so long unused, the galleries and state-chambers, awoke to new life, and Olivia hovered about them like the beautiful princess in a fairy tale, joyous and active, and with a heart full of happy presentiments.

“What a little housewife!” murmured the knight with fatherly pride. “How you have improved since the evening you first received guests for me at Childerley.”

“But that is two years ago, father,” replied Olivia; “I was a child then.”

And indeed what a difference was there be-

tween the child of sixteen and the blooming girl of eighteen ! The bud of life had developed into the sweetest and loveliest flower. It was not that the features taken separately could be pronounced perfect, but that there was such a charming harmony in the whole, and the soft coy witchery of maidenhood surrounded her with a poetic halo.

"A child you are no longer, Olivia," said the knight, stroking her fair hair ; "but my child you will ever be."

It is needless to say that the loyal knight superintended with hearty zeal the various arrangements for receiving his beloved monarch, and, as in the good old times, Martin Bumpus was again his special confidant. The good fellow had left his mill, saying to his wife :—

"Keep an eye on the lads ; I must away to the castle, for our King is coming."

Wreaths were woven of oak leaves and flowers ; garlands hung over every door-way, and soon the royal standard was fluttering over the Castle of Childerley, whilst above the tower of the wing the King was to occupy was hoisted the Scottish flag.

Since the return of the vicar from Cam-

bridge he had been the guest of the squire ; he could not, however, feel at home in Childerley as he had once done, for he missed his quiet parsonage house and the church opposite. The knight endeavoured to cheer him after his fashion :—

“What !” cried he ; “are you grieving now we are on the right road ! We shall soon drive out yonder cropped-eared rascal from the nest where he has laid his cuckoo’s eggs, now that the King is coming !”

The knight’s flattering words had reference to the Presbyterian successor of Dr. Hewitt.

The doctor, however, could not change the tone of his feelings, and now that he was near the goal at which he had so long aimed, a feeling of distrust crept over him, and doubts stronger than himself arose, with which he in vain struggled in earnest prayer. The last conversation with Frank Herbert had greatly contributed to strengthen these doubts. He had been very much struck by the violence and irritability of his friend’s manner, from the first moment of their meeting. They had both said at one time that no difference of opinion would ever separate them, but now Hewitt felt, with sorrow, that a rupture must

take place between them if Frank continued obstinately in his dangerous course ; for the drift of all his arguments was, that any idea of a reconciliation with the King, under what conditions soever, was no better than high treason. Frank said he expressed the voice of the army ; and though it might be only a part of the army, yet Frank belonged to that part.

A sweet hope sometimes gladdened the heart of the vicar when he looked at Olivia. "For might not the language of the heart succeed, where the eloquence of friendship tries in vain ?" This thought occupied him now more than ever.

A gracious message had, meanwhile, arrived from his Majesty, announcing that during his stay at the castle he would give audience to the authorities of the surrounding counties, and to the learned corporations of Cambridge, and receive their assurances of allegiance.

The knight's heart glowed with satisfaction to think that his Majesty could once more hold this style of language, and he already felt that the golden days were returning, when the King would again reign in all his glory, and his subjects obey as in duty bound.

He was in such a happy frame of mind that he even began to hum the tune of his favourite ballad, and although, whilst taking a survey of his domains, he discovered a troop of Cromwell's dragoons in the distance, the sight did not damp his cheerful mood. He was aware that divisions of all the regiments had been ordered out to serve as a guard of honour to his Majesty, and to escort him eventually to one of the royal residences, where peace was to be concluded and signed.

"It is possible," said the worthy knight, stepping back from the window, where he had been on the look-out, "that I have been deceived in him—in—Cromwell;" for the first time for many years he mentioned the name. "Truly it would brighten the rest of my days if I could offer him my hand, and say, 'Oliver, we were once friends.'"

The castle was now in festive array for its expected guest, and the evening sun was shedding its soft golden light, as Olivia wandered dreamily along the path which led through the park. The massive gateway was open, and the drawbridge was down, for on such a day no entrance was bolted or barred. She sauntered into the fields, allured by the

peaceful picture spread before her. The birds were still singing, and the chimes of the distant villages were wafted upon the summer breeze. In the midst of her happiness, Olivia thought of the absent one, her lost friend Manuella, with whom she had often wandered under the old trees.

On the brink of a little brook, which was ever murmuring and rustling, she stooped to gather some forget-me-nots. As she listened to its rippling, she remembered how often, as a little child, she had been there with her mother, and her sweet pale image rose up before her. She passed on into a green lane, the branches on either side of which arched over her head, forming a leafy roof. The tendrils of the wild convolvulus climbed up the banks, and the sweet-scented honeysuckle twined about the hedges. Unconsciously Olivia picked flower after flower, and wove them into a wreath. Should castle and hall be decorated with garlands, and her mother's grave remain unadorned?

With her flowery burden she ascended the rising ground, at the end of the lane, which looked straight down upon the road leading to the village. She was thinking sorrowfully

of her dear mother, when she was recalled roughly to the present by the noise on the road beneath, caused by the same troop of dragoons that Sir Tobias had previously perceived from his windows. Olivia would gladly have retreated unnoticed, but it was already too late.

The colonel, who was riding a little behind his troops, stopped his horse as he saw a lady, and bowed as their looks met. This unexpected meeting took her so much by surprise, that she let fall all the flowers she had gathered, and standing amidst the thousand fragrant blossoms she looked like some charming goddess, or fairy of spring. She stooped to pick up the flowers to conceal her embarrassment, which made her look more lovely.

Frank Herbert (for it was he) swung himself off his horse, and with a few vigorous strides climbed up the bank to the place where Olivia stood. Before a word had been exchanged between them, he busied himself with collecting her flowers from the ground, and as he thus knelt for one moment before her, and she in sweet shyness turned half away from him, a distant observer might have

given a different interpretation to Frank Herbert's harmless gallantry. The young soldier soon rose, and presenting the whole cluster of flowers to Olivia, said,—

"Fortune prepared a kind welcome for me in the shape of these flowers."

"They were intended for my mother's grave," said Olivia, looking down.

She now for the first time gave her hand to the colonel, and though there was a storm within her breast, she knew the protecting spirit of her mother would be with her.

A serious expression came over Frank's hitherto bright face as he said,—

"In these times we must step over graves to attain our wished-for aims ; even in the very summer of our strength how much is our heart lacerated. Oh, dear lady ! if it were allowable to cherish such a wish, would we had been allowed to live in a happier century !"

The words of the man, whom she had loved from the first meeting, and had not since seen, made a great impression on her. She looked at him inquiringly, and with the innocence of a child.

"Forgive me," he cried, seizing her hand

and pressing it to his lips, "for inflicting my gloomy forebodings upon you at this pleasant moment ; but your presence will soon drive them away." He called out to the groom who had taken his horse, and was leading it in the rear of the troop, which had continued its way to the village : " Wait for me at the castle gate, for that," said he, turning to Olivia, " is indeed my destination. I have to inform the master of Childerley that to-morrow his excellency the general will be there with his whole staff."

Olivia's eyes sparkled with joy.

"Thank God !" she exclaimed, "then all who have been separated by this cruel war will meet again at last : friends and relations, the King and his people ! There will be happiness everywhere !"

They now returned by the pretty green lane to the park.

"Let me show you the shorter way," said Olivia. "How happy my father will be !"

"Do you really think so ? To have soldiers quartered upon him ? To receive guests unbidden ?"

"Do not speak so, Colonel Herbert," replied Olivia. "I know my father is ready to

bury all prejudices of past years in the universal feeling of joy that now fills each breast."

"But if your father—if all should be deceived?"

Olivia stood still in her surprise. They had now reached the park, and the last golden rays of evening lingered on the branches.

"Oh, hear me, Olivia!" said the colonel, in a voice full of emotion, "why should I conceal from you that this moment of our meeting has been my constant thought for the last two years? It has been my dream, my longing desire. You tremble! You turn pale! You withdraw your dear hand from me! Oh, fear nothing from me; my heart has learnt to be silent. It cares not to speak of itself. It is of you that I would speak."

He had led the almost passive girl gently through the gate; it was nearly dark, and under the trees that twilight reigned which possesses a magic power in bringing two hearts together, which would timidly hide their feelings in the broad light of day.

"Olivia," said Frank, as the young girl stood before him, with eyes bent down, "what

an awakening after such dreams! You are hoping for an impossible thing. The future, on which you build, is a phantom castle, great and glorious it may be, like a building in the clouds, gilded by the setting sun; but, nevertheless, only a phantom, to be dispersed in thin air. Peace! do you say? Have you power to still the infuriated elements? They would laugh at your attempts, and be deaf to your prayers and threats. Olivia, we are standing in the midst of a terrible storm, its final peals have still to shake the heavens."

Olivia's head had sunk, and amidst tears she softly whispered :

"And for individuals, is there no more happiness to hope for?"

They had now reached the lime-trees, under which Olivia had once sat with Manuella.

Frank took both her hands in his, and she no longer struggled to withdraw them.

"To be a champion in the cause of freedom," he cried, his face glowing with enthusiasm, "is man's noblest vocation. How few conquer in the struggle, and how pitiful and miserable is a life passed in a compromise with conviction, and in which care for the present leads to the abandonment of the

future. This is the position I have to face, Olivia, and this it is that troubles me. To conclude a peace with the King is, in my opinion, to sell the people and freedom, and that is why I have been so much against this meeting. No good can [arise from it; it is either the end of our hopes, or the beginning of our fears. Olivia, can you understand what it is to grow perplexed with one's idols? When I mention the name of Cromwell, I have told you at once the object of my purest worship, and of my most terrible doubts."

Olivia felt the strong man's hands tremble as they clasped her own.

"You ask me," he continued, "if there be no hope for individuals? Yes, there is. They can withdraw from the conflict, and renounce the blessed thought of noble deeds. They can retire into solitude, and die inglorious."

"Is there nothing to compensate for such a sacrifice?" asked Olivia, gently. She had no design, certainly, in asking this question; she loved the man, and love spoke in her question. Frank, too, loved the maiden, and love understands the voice of love.

He clasped her to him with all the passion of a first love, which speaks for the first time.

She did not resist, but sank on his breast, and felt, as in a dream, the kisses with which he covered her burning face. He drew her softly to him on the grassy bank beneath the lime-tree, and caressed the dear head.

"Oh!" he cried, "let us go home to the fields of my childhood! There, surrounded by forest trees and quiet meadows, stands my beautiful castle. There, my darling, will I take you, and there will we be happy, far from the noise of the world, and the voice of discord."

She fell weeping on his neck.

It was late before they reached the castle, and already lights could be seen here and there. Frank Herbert's horse was pawing the ground before the gateway, impatiently awaiting the return of his master.

The squire of Childerley accorded a hearty welcome to this soldier of Cromwell, for in his honest heart he viewed his presence as a pledge of better days. Olivia was quiet; the secret she carried within her made her timid before others, though infinitely happy in herself.

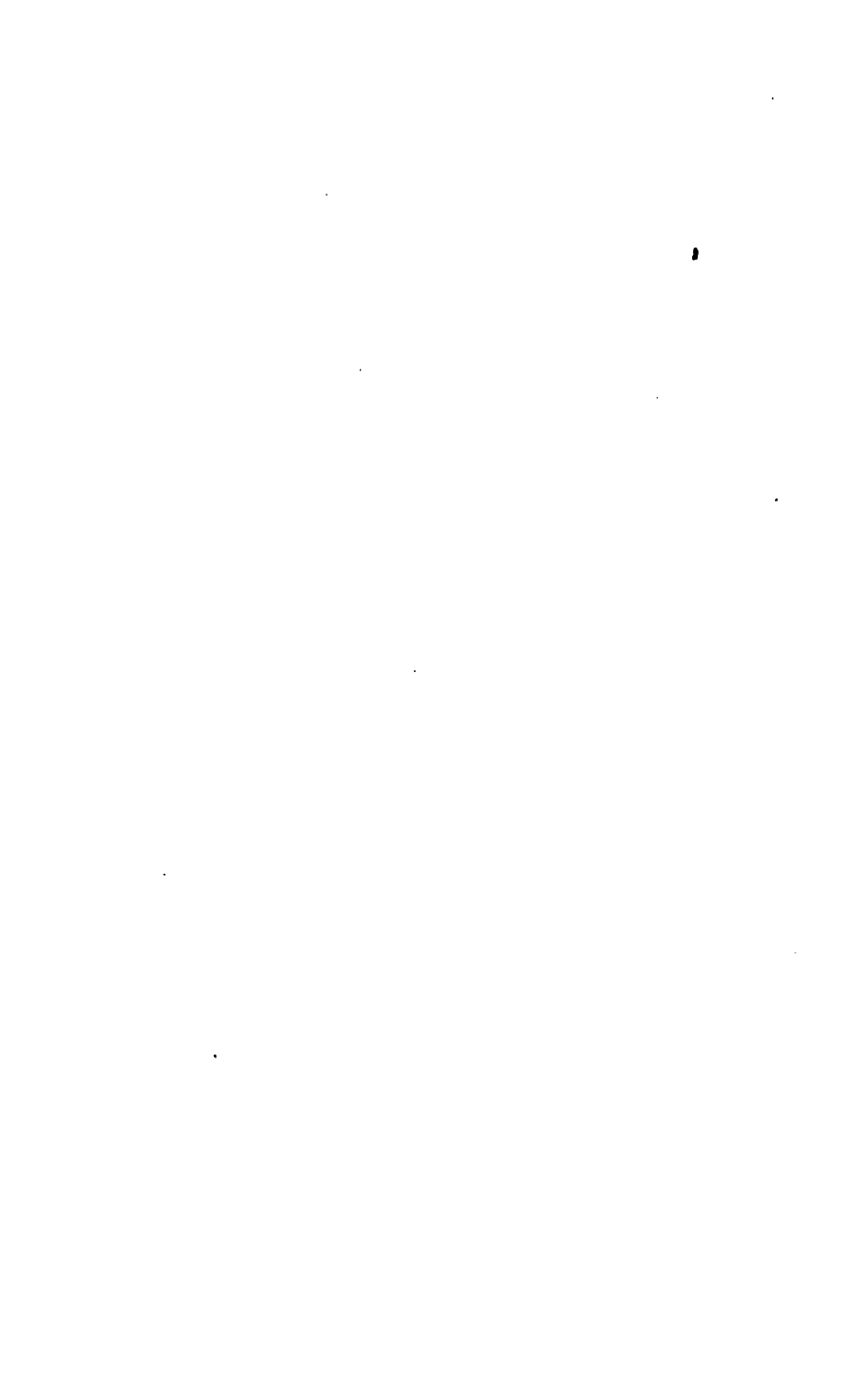
But who can describe the surprised delight of Dr. Hewitt, when Frank, drawing him out

under the trees of the park, confided to him all that had passed between Olivia and himself.

"I shall give up my commission," he said, "and leave the army. You possess the confidence of the squire, so I must beg you to intercede for me. At the first suitable moment, you must ask him, on my behalf, to let me become a suitor for Olivia's hand!"

The doctor saw in this the accomplishment of what he so earnestly desired. Freed from his last doubts, he gave himself up to the feeling of happiness, praised the resolve of his friend, and thanked God in his heart, who had so directed all things.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.





the 1990s, the number of people in the UK who are employed in the public sector has increased by 1.5 million, from 2.5 million in 1980 to 4 million in 1995. The public sector has become a major employer in the UK, and its growth has been a major factor in the overall growth of the economy.

The public sector has also become a major provider of social services, and its growth has been a major factor in the overall growth of the economy. The public sector has become a major provider of social services, and its growth has been a major factor in the overall growth of the economy. The public sector has become a major provider of social services, and its growth has been a major factor in the overall growth of the economy.

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